

THE LIFE  
OF THE HOLIE  
FATHER S. FRANCIS

WRITTEN BY SAINT BONA-  
venture, and as it is related by the Reue-  
rend Father Aloyfius Lipomanus Bishop  
of Veron.

In his fourth tome of the life of Saintes.

*Hic vir despicient mundum, et terrena triumphans,  
Divitias celo condidit, ore manu.*



Printed at DOVAY by LAVRENCE  
KELLAM. 1610.



THE LIFE  
**APPROBATIO.**

Hæc vita S. Francisci per S. Bonauen-  
turam olim conscripta, & nunc in lin-  
guam Anglicam fideliter translata, dig-  
na est quæ in lucem edatur, & ab omni-  
bus legatur. Actum Duaci Calendis  
Martii 1610.

*Georgius Coluenerius S. Theologiae Do-  
ctor & Professor, & librorum in Acade-  
mia Duacensi Visitator & Censor.*



Printed at Dordrecht by J. VAN NEEB  
KELIAM 1610.



TO THE RIGHT VVOR-  
 shipfull and most vvorthy religious  
 gentleman A. B. all happynes in Christ  
 our Lord vvisheth E. H.

**S**uch is that sweetnesse, and imprisable com-  
 forte of spirit (Right VVorshipfull and pious  
 Syr) vvhich the readinge of Santes Lives can  
 effecte in our soules, that I fully persvade  
 my selfe that amongst the exercises be-  
 seeminge a Catholike Christiane, the readinge and perusinge  
 of this present subiecte, vvill not be the leaste forcible and  
 efficacious to induce men to embrace vertues Path, and  
 constantly to sustaine the manifolde afflictions vvhich in  
 these our miserable times are moste ordinarie and frequent  
 vvith Gods best belovede seruantes, this litle vvorke, smal-  
 le in quantity, yett riche & precious, for the matter it  
 doth treat of, containeth the life of that most rare and ad-  
 mirable Sante, S. Francis; vvhich came to my handes by  
 meanes of a poore (yet ever honeste) banished countrey man  
 of myne, vvho vvantage helpe, and meanes, to publishe it,  
 I moste willingly lett therevnto my helpinge hande to fur-  
 ther so good a vvorke. vvhich beinge novve perfectede, I  
 commend vnto your selfe, as one selected and chosen by  
 me, vvorthie in manie respectes before others, desiringe  
 that you vvould vouchsafe to vndertake the patronizinge  
 of this my ever propens duety tovvardes your best deser-  
 vinge selfe; vouchsafe therefore favorably to accepte of  
 my greate goodvvill, though shrovved vnder the veyle of a  
 small presente, vvhich I offer not as intendinge thereby to  
 requite, or equalize those many benefites of yours, for my  
 best endeavours vvill be farre avvantinge from due propor-  
 tion and equality, seinge that the acceptaunce hereof requi-



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reth a newve kindnes; but to reneve and stirr vp in my  
 selfe some memorie of your respectede desertes, and accor-  
 dinge to my povvere to sheve my vvillinge desire to gra-  
 tifie in vvhat I may your greate good vvill, I presente vnto  
 you not that vniuersalle and moſte admirable troope of all  
 Gods Saintes (for that these you and others may hereafter  
 by some other meanſe receaue) but this one life in particu-  
 lare, of that moſt blessed man S. *Francis*; vvherein you may  
 be houlde (as in a glasse) the full abundance of Angelicall  
 conversation; and as in vvwhich is compendiously containe  
 the ſume of a perfect life, I vvill here omitte to recounte his  
 rare vertues, his invincible fortitude, his Admirable tempe-  
 rance, profound humility, patience, longanimity, moſt fer-  
 uent charity, immouable fayth, dauntles hope, and ſuch like  
 innumerable vertues, becauſe all theſe vvill be exactly mani-  
 feſted vnto you in this treatiſe, yea ſuch is the excellencie  
 of this Saint, that (beit ſpoken vvithout preiudice, or de-  
 rogation to other Saintes) he is thought by his ſurmounting  
 holynes, to haue atchiued and purchaſed not the lowveſt  
 ſeate in euerlaſting ioy, for vvhill the Prince of Angels, and  
 greateſt of all creatures in naturall dovvries (Lucifer him-  
 ſelfe) thinking by his arrogante pride to haue aſcended,  
 and (as the ſcripture ſaith of him) to haue been *Similis altis-  
 ſimo*, like vnto the higheſt, vvvas throwne dovvne headlong  
 in to the bottomles dongion of hell and euerlaſting damna-  
 tion; he by his moſt rare humility, he hath deſerued to be  
 exalted, and in throwne in that kingdom, vvwhich he by his  
 contrary pride irreconectably loſt: So as in this vve may ſee  
 the deuine providence, and vnſearchable vvifedome of  
 god allmyghty, vvwhich reuwardeth all, according to theire  
 deſerts, veryfying this ſaying, *Depoſuit potentes de ſede, & ex-  
 altauit humiles*; he hath put the mighty from theire ſeate, and  
 hath exalted the humble and meeke, agreeing allſoe vvith an  
 other place, *Qui ſe exaltat humiliabitur, & qui ſe humiliat ex-  
 altabitur*; he that exalteth himſelfe ſhalbe humbled, ore caſt  
 dovvne, and he vvwhich humbleth him ſelfe ſhalbe exalted,  
 thus vve ſe how he exalteth his Saintes, vvhill Lucifer and his  
 complices are deſtrued of that place, vvwhich theire vniuſt  
 aſpiring could not yealde them, and therefore are becom  
 an aproby to the reſt of the blessed Angeles, and deadly

*Eſaye 14.*

*LUC. 1.*

*LUC. 18.*

enimies



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enimies to mankynde: seekinge all wayes by their manifold delusions to bringe others into that desperat estate in vvhich they knowe themselves to be for euer: for as Saint Peter saith: *Diabolus tanquam leo vagiens circuit, querens quem deuoret.* The deuill like a roringe lyon goeth about seekinge vvhom he may deuoure, Against vvhom, and vvhose most guilfull procedings: vvhich is more auaylable, and of greater force, then the vertue of Christ his wvounds his, and al Saints merits and intercessions: vnder vvhose bannour he that fighteth (as all Christian Catholiques ought most constantly to doe) although, often tryed, and assailed by spirituall foes, yet can he neuer be overcome, and hauing patience to sustayne, it vwill redound vnto a greater crowne of glorie. For if vve suffer afflictions in this vvorlde, and for the singeare loue of God endure them courageously: vve shall vndoubtedly reape those incomprehensible rewarde: *Qua nec auris audiuit, nec oculus vidit, nec in cor hominis ascendit,* vvhich neyther eare hath heard, nor eye hath seene nor hath ascended into the hart of man to imagine the molestacions, and troubles, of this present vvorlde, are not condigne of the glorie to come (as the Apostle saith) *Non sunt condigna passionibus huius temporis ad futuram gloriam quae reuelabitur in nobis,* neither must vve imagine that if God send afflictions vpou his seruants, either temporall, or spirituall: that he vvithdrawveth his loue, or zeale of our saluation: nay his scourge doth preface greater loue, and affection to his tried seruants: for he saith, *Ego quos amo arguo, & castigo,* vvhom I loue: I chasten, therefore he often suffereth our spirituall aduersarie to trie vs, (as he did holie Iob) not aboue our pover to resiste, but vvith his grace to overcome, and conquer our enemy. *Fidelis enim Deus est qui non patietur nos tetari supra id quod possumus, sed faciat cum tentatione prouentum.* For God is faithfull, vvho vwill not suffer vs to be tempted aboue that vve are able, but vwill make also vvith temptation issue, that vve may be able to sustaine, but vvhich should I inculcate patience and perseuerance vnto such an one as your selfe: seeinge that amongst soe many seruants of God you haue all ready borne your parte in these afflictions: vvherevvith God is vvont to try his best beloved seruants, in so much as all eares are filled vvith the sound of your valorous

1. Pet. 5.

1. Cor. 2.

Rom. 8.

Apo. 3.

1. Cor. 10.



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Apoc. 21.

.5.100.1

.8.100.1

.01.100.1

courage; in so stoutly enduring the assaults of your enemies, all tongues speak of it, and all hearts stand amazed at the strangeness of your virtuous life. Dere Syr, these happy are those, who sustain any affliction in this world, for Gods sake, for our sakes deserving (no doubt) much punishment; who can not escape it, a great, and particulare favour to be visited here with some molestations: rather then to have the paines due to sin reserved, to be in the next world, a thousand times more severely punished. For seeme: *Nihil conquinatum possit intrare in regnum celorum.* No vncleane thing can enter into the kingdom of heaven, but if any paine remaine to be inflicted: they are to be purged with that fire of purgatory, infinitely, and without comparison, exceedinge in heat our terrestriale fire. Much therefore and extremely blinded are those, who thinke them selues happy when they escape the punishments of this world, little consideringe the iustice of God, who leaueh not the least sin unpunished, and if the estate of such that deferre those paines vntill the next world, be much to be lamented and pitied, what (alas) and how miserable, then is the condition and estate of those who neither in this, nor in the world to come; can satisfie for their committed crimes: but through all eternitie, are to sustaine the vnexplicable tormentes of hell fire, this I leave to the consideration of those, who are segregated from that fould & vnitie, of the holie Catholique Church, out of the which no saluation can be had: which most miserable condition, hath now possessed the greatest parte of our deere countrey; for like an vniuersall deluge, heresie hath so infected and drownded the soules therein, that they cannot lifte vp their drouisie eies, to consider their desperat estate, but by vvallovinge in all kinde of vicious behauioure, do make themselves a derision to their enemies the deuils; a sorrowfull spectacle to the wise, & thereby purchase endlesse miserie to themselves. They thinke euery houre spent in the exercise of virtuous life, to be vainly employed, & esteeme it an happinesse to exceede in vices; deridinge those, that giue them occasion either by word, or writinge, which may induce to the seruice and true honor of God. and would it a madnesse, to spende any houre in readinge, (much more in imitatinge)



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imitatinge) the herpicall actes of Sainctes: yea they will rather scoffe, at any vvorthie, & memorable exploit done by Gods seruantes (caling it a delusion of the deuell then endeavour to consider that Sainctes by mortification of the flesh, and not by pampringe, and decking theyr corruptible bodies, haue obtained the priuileges of Gods seruantes) by makinge themselves an habitacle of the holy ghost: vvhetheras the other by doinge contrarie, make theire corporall substance, a mansion house of all vices. VVho so therefore desireth, to exterpate, and banish from him these euils: let him first repayer to the vniuity of the Catholike Church, vvhether he may not only be partaker of the contynuall prayers, and deuotions, done in the same, by the liuinge here on earth, but alsoe of the sufferages, of the immortal, and blessed soules in heauen, vvho can, and vvill most certainly succour, and help those that trust in Gods, and there protection: lett them therefore suppose, vvhen they finde and reade the life, and actes, of any Saint, that then they haue gotten an vnfallible directory, of there future conuersation: Amongest vvich I earnestly commend this of Saint Francis, to theire mature consideration, out of the vvich they may draw a compendious rule, to guide them in all theire actions. But I vvill returne my speech agayne to your most respected and Right vvorshipfull selfe: desiring your fauourable kyndnes to interpret this my ouer bold attempte, accordinge to the sincerity of my intention, and so I committe this present treatise, vnder the shielde of your benigne acceptance, for knowing my selfe obliged in all duty, to apply my best indeauours, in such sorte, as maye seeme acceptable to your selfe, acknowledginge alsoe my selfe soe much bound in insoluble bonds, to vvish, and pray dayly, for the most prosperous, and godly proceedings in all things, both of your selfe, and your vvell deseruing family: vvich togeather vvith your selfe (for breuities sake) I most hartly offer conioynedly vnto thall mighty his protection, desiring him to giue you all sufficiencie in temporall respectes, and superabundant increase of supernaturall graces: And lastly I request you vvould vouchsafe to spend some vacant houers in reading, and admiring, this Saints perfection: and If any one reape any spiritnall frute by this

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my labour, I accomptre my paynes fully rewarded; if no  
my vvilling mind remayneth vnyvorable: yet howsoever  
let all be done to the honor and glory of the euerlastin  
deiry, three in persons, and one in essence: next, (before a  
creatures) most vvorthy honor and glory, to Christ his mo  
blessed mother, perpetuall virgin, to the holy Appostle  
Saint Francis, and all the heavenly troope, vnto vvhoose in  
tercessions, I once againe perpetually commit, this morta  
perigrination of you, and yours: happily to be consumma  
ted: that after this transitory life, you may possesse togea  
ther vvith them, eternall ioye and felicitie. Amen.

Yours obliged in all dutie.

E. H.





THE LIFE OF THE  
MOST HOLIE FA-  
THER S. FRANCIS.

VVrittē, & in one Booke compi-  
*led by that Famous & Learned*

man Saint BONAVENTURE, a Frear

Minor, Cardinall of the holy Romane

Church, Bishop of ALBA, and

*the seraphicall Doctour of*  
the Church.

E. H.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

*Of saint Francis his conuersation in secular habite.*



IN the City of *Assisium*, there was  
a man called FRANCIS, whose  
name remaineth in blessed me-  
mory: for being prevented by the  
sweete blessings of GOD, he was  
mercifully delivered frō the dan-  
gers of this present life, & filled abundantly with  
the influences of Heavenly grace. For being in his  
youth nourished in vanities, among the vaine chil-  
dren of men, & being also after some littel know-  
ledge of Learning, deputed to the gainfull trade of  
Merchandise; yet by the assistance of God, nei-  
ther when hee was most addicted vnto pleasure,  
did hee followe the wantonnesse of the flethe  
among lascivious young men, no. yet when he



was most intentiue to gaine, did he put his confidence in mony and treasures, as covetous negoti- atours are commonly woont to doe. But in his hart there was euen from his infancy ingrafted a certaine singular pittie, & commiseration towards the poore, which growing and encreasing toge- ther with his yeeres, did replenish his heart with so bountifull an affection in that behalfe, that opening his eares to the wordes of the Gospell, he purposed with himselfe to giue somewhat vnto euery one that should aske him; especially making demaund for the sake of God.

But whereas once vpon occasion of his trou- blesome businesse, whereto he was very inten- tiue, he did contrary to his custome, neglect the request of a poore man, that asked him almes for the loue of God: he presently remembring him- selfe, and entring into iudgement with his owne heart; did speedily runne after him, bestowing his almes with much affection vpon him, making furthermore, euen then a promise vnto Almighty God, that from thence forward, so long as he should haue any thing in the worlde to giue, hee would never denie to giue something, to such as should begge of him for our Lords sake: which he observing continually with an vnwearied zeale of devotion, vnto his death; was thereby made woorthie to obtaine an abundant encrease of the fauour and grace of Almighty God. For he was woont to say, after that he had perfectly put on Christ, that even whilest he was in secular ha- bite, he felt a great motion in his heart, whenso-  
ever



ever he heard any worde expressing the loue of God. Furthermore the mildnesse of his conversation, together with the sweetnesse of his manners; his patience, and tractable behaviour, more the is ordinary in me; & his liberality, beyond the measure of his ability; which appeared in him in his youth, were tokens; that God had a greater abundance of blessing to powre vpon him.

It fortun'd once that a very simple man of *Assisum* (by the instruction of God, as we haue good cause to thinke) meeting vpon a time with Saint FRANCIS, as he passed along the Citty; cast off his cloake, and spread the same vnder his feete; affirming that he should be worthie of all manner of reverence: the time beeing nowe not long vnto, wherein he should performe great matters: and should be of the whole worlde for that cause marveilously honored. But yet altogether ignorant was S. FRANCIS at this time of Gods determination concerning him: as well beeing by the commaundement of his father, distracted in externall affaires: as also, by naturall corruption, carried away with terrestriall matters; whereby he had not as yet learned to contemplate vpo the matters of Heauen, nor had accustomed himselfe to taste of the sweetnesse of God. And because the scourge of affliction doth oftentimes giue light to the spirituall vnderstanding, the mighty hande of our Lord did come vpon him. & the right hand of the highest wrought a perfect change within him; afflicting his body with lingring infirmities, whereby the better to prepare his soule



4  
to receiue the precious inspirations and motions of the Holy Ghost. But having recovered his strength, and being provided of decent apparell according to his vsuall manner; he chanced to meete a certaine souldiar, who was in yery deede a gentleman by birth, but poore and meanelly apparelled; whose poverty he commiserating with a syncere affection, dispoiled himselfe of his own apparell; and furnished the poore souldiar therewithall: that so, in one worke, he might performe a double office, of piety; both in covering the shame, of a gentleman souldiar; & in relieueing the misery of a poore distressed man.

In the night following, when he had betaken himselfe to his naturall rest; it pleased the goodnesse of God, to shew vnto him a great and beautifull pallace, adorned with Military weapons, insigned with the Crosse of CHRIST: then forthewing vnto him, that the mercy which he had extended towards the poore souldiar, for the loue of the heavenly King; should be recompenced with an incomparable reward. Wherevpon demanding vnto whom all those goodly things did appertaine; it was aunswered to him from aboue, that they should be vpon him and his souldiars; freely bestowed. Awaking therefore in the morning, and having his minde not as yet exercised in the searching of Divine mysteries; neither yet knowing how by the formes of visible thinges to consider the truth of things, invisible; he perswaded himselfe, that this vnaccustomed vision; was a fore token of some great prosperity, to hap-



pen vnto him. So being as yet ignorant of Gods  
Divine ordinance towards him, he purposed to  
goe into *Apulia*, vnto a certaine Earle of great li-  
berality; hoping by service vnder him in the wars  
to purchase a name of honour: according as the  
mentioned vision; vnto him seemed, to foretell.  
And being shortly after, entred into his iourney;  
as he came to the next Citty, he heard in the night  
time, our Lord in familiar manner, thus speaking  
vnto him. FRANCIS, who is able to doe  
better for thee, the master or the servant, the rich  
man or the poore? To whom Saint FRANCIS  
making aunswere, that the master; and the rich  
man were better able: Our Lord presently replied;  
why therefore doest thou leaue the master, for the  
servant; and the rich God, for a poore man. Then  
Saint FRANCIS asked, what wilt thou haue me,  
O Lord to doe? And our Lord said vnto him; re-  
turne into thine owne country: for the vision  
which thou hast scene, doth prefigure a spiritual  
effect; which is to be, by the disposition of God,  
& not of man; accomplished in thee. In the  
morning therefore, he speedily returned backe to  
*Assisum*, resting nowe full of security and ioy: &  
making himselfe a patterne of obedience, did rea-  
dily expect the pleasure of our Lord. From that  
time forward hee with-drewe himselfe from the  
practise of his common trafique, and devoutly be-  
sought Almighty God, of his mercy; that hee  
would vouchsafe to shew vnto him, what he ought  
to doe. And when by much vse of praier, the  
flame of Heavenly desire; began abundantly to



encrease in him; so that nowe for the loue of the Heavenly country, hee contemned all earthely things, as very nothing; then did he well perceiue himselfe to haue found, the hidden treasure; & like a well aduised marchant, purposed with the sale of all his marchandise; to purchase this rare and pretious pearle. But as yet he was ignorant how to proceed therein: saving that it was to his spirit sugested; that the entring into spirituall affaires, is the contempt of the world; and that the warfare of Christ, is not otherwise to be by any man begun, than by obtaining first, the conquest of himselfe.

Beholde  
howe his  
adorning  
the Altar:  
did please  
god, other-  
wise the  
holy man  
woulde  
not haue  
done this.

Riding therefore one day vpon the plaine, adioyning nigh to *Assisum*: there came in his way, a certaine *Leaper*: vpon whose sodaine aspect, he co-ceived in mind, an especiall horror, and loathing. But returning to his already resolved purpose of perfection: and considering that he ought of necessity first, to overcome himselfe, if he would become the souldiar of Christ: he presently alighted downe from his horse, and went to kisse him. At what time the *Leaper*, reaching forth his hand: as hoping to receiue something from him: did indeed receiue money of him: and a kisse also therewithall. But he being presently gotten vp, vpon his horse againe, and looking round about in the open field, could not espie the *Leaper* there. Being therefore replenished, with admiration and ioy, he began devoutly to sing praises vnto God, purposing from this beginning: evermore to aspire vnto greater perfections.

From



From thenceforth he began to affect solitary places, as best fitting vnto mourning and lamentation: wherevnto with redoubled sighes, he incessantly gaue ouer himselfe: vntill such time, that after long instance of Praier: he obtained of our Lord, with his inclinable eare, to heare the same. For one day, as he was praying in a solitary place, & through excesse of fervour, wholly (in manner) absorpted vp in God: Christ Iesus our Lord, vntasafed to appeare vnto him: fast nailed as it were, vpon the C R O S S E. At the sight wherof, his soul melted within him: & the memory of the Passion of Christ, was so efficaciously imprinted into his heart, that from that houre, so often as he remembered the Crucifixing of Christ: he was hardly able to abstaine from sighes and teares, externally bursting out vpon him: as himselfe afterward, familiarly reported, drawing then nigh vnto his end. For hereby the man of God, did fulwell vnderstand, that those wordes of the G O S P E L: *If thou wilt come after me, denie thy selfe, and take vp thy Crosse and followe me:* were directly spoken vnto himself. From that time did he therefore put on vpon him, the spirit of povery, a perfect sence of humility, and a zealous affection of inward Piety. For whereas before he could not abide the company of such as were infected with *Leaprofse*, no, not so much as to see them, though distant a good way from him: nowe for the loue of Christ Crucified, who according to the wordes of the Prophet, seemed contemptible as a *Leaper*: that he might fully contemne himselfe: he did with a godly kind of benignity,

*Behold his  
pilgrimage  
to holy  
places.*



even towards the Leapers : performe the duties of humility, and of all manner, of good humanity. For he visited oftentimes their houses, & liberally bestowing his almes among them; & with great affection of charitable commiseration disdained not to kisse their handes, & their mouthes. As for poore beggars also, it was his desire to bestowe vpon them, not only his goodes, but himselfe therewithall : sometimes putting off his owne apparell; sometime vnripping the same, & sometime, for lack of other, more conuenient meanes, cutting it in partes, to bestowe vpon the To poore Priests also, he gaue succoure, with much reuerence and devotion, especially in the ornaments of the Aulter : that he might both be partaker of the honour giuen vnto God: & might also supply the wants of such: as were to exhibite the same vnto him.

One time visiting the Church of Saint *Peter* the Apostle with religious deuotion, and beholding a great multitude of poore people, before the doores of the Church, he being then partly moued, with the sweetnes of piety : partly allured, with the loue of pouerty, gaue vnto one of the poorest of them, his owne apparell, and couering himselfe with the ragges of the poore man spent that whole day ioyfully in the midst of the poore : with an vnwonted alacrity, and ioy of spirit: Thereby, as well to contemne all wordly glory, as also to arise, as it were by degrees, and to clime vp, to the top of Euangelicall perfection. Very vigilant he was in mortification of the flesh

that



that so he might externally in his body, carry about the Crosse of Christ: as he did internally enermore, beare the same, in his hart. All these things did Saint Francis the servant of God, not being yet, either in habite, or conversation, sequestred from the world.

### THE SECOND CHAPTER.

*Of his perfect conuersion vnto God, and how he repaired three Churches.*

**B**V T because the servant of the highest, had no other teacher in these matters, but only Christ himselfe, it pleased his merciefull goodness yet further to visite him in the swetnes of his grace. For as being one day gone forth into the feild to meditate, he walked along by a Church dedicated vnto Saint *Damian*, which was so old and ruinous that it seemed ready to fall to the ground, by the instinct of Gods holy spirit, he entered into the same to pray: and falling prostrate before the image of Christ Crucified, was in his praier replenished with a singular consolation of spirit. And as he did with weeping eies beholde the Crosse of our Lord, he heard with his corporall eares, a voice from this same Crosse, speaking thus three times vn to him: *Francis, go, and repaire my House, which as thou seest, is wholly destroied. Saint Francis* being then alone in the Church trembled not a litle thereat, as being much amased at the hearing of so woonderfull a voice: and feeling in his hart the efficacie of Gods

*See how the holy Father doth subdue the concupiscence of the flesh by his mortification.*

*Churches were builded for to pray in. Learn that to bēd ones knees vnto images, & to pray to those whom they do represent, is a good and pious work. & so what a miracle Christ did worke by this his image.*



He arose  
signeing  
himselfe  
with the  
signe of the  
Crosse.

Gods heauenly worde, became as it were alienated from himselfe in minde. But returning afterwards to his perfect remembrance, he readily prepared himself vnto obedience, wholly disposing himself towards the performance of the commandement, concerning the repairing of the materiall Church: though the more principall intencion thereof, had relation vnto that Church, which Christ had purchased with his owne blood: as he was afterwarde taught by the holy-Ghost, and did himself reueale vnto his brethren. Rising vp therefore, and arming himself with the signe of the Crosse, he tooke vnto him certaine clothes provided for sale, which he speedily carried vnto the Citty of *Fulligney*: and there selling his wares, and also the horse whereon he rode, the happy marchant, beinge well contented departed with the price thereof in mony. And so returning to *Affisium*, he reuerently entered the church, which he was commaunded to repaire: and finding a poore Priest therein, after due reuerence done vnto him, made offer of his mony for the reparation of the Church, and towards the reliefe also of the poore: making furthermore his humble sute vnto him, for licence to abide with him there for a time. The Priest well allowed of his aboade in the place: but misdoubring his parents assent for the mony, vnterly refused to accept thereof, which neuerthelesse the true con-temner of mony, casting into one of the windows, esteemed it no better than pelfe and dust.

Now whilest the seruant of God was thus abi-



ding with the forementioned Priest: as toone as his Father got knowledg thereof, he as one much perplexed in minde, rüne with great hast and speed to the place. But *Francis* being as yet but a yong soldier in the armie of Christ, when as he hearde the threatenings of them, that did persecute him, and did also perceiue their comming at hand: being then desirous to giue place to the force of their iury, betooke himselfe to a secret Caue, whearein closely concealing himself for a few daies, he incessantly besought our Lord with aboundance of teares, that he would vouchsafe to deliver his soule, from his persecutors handes: and that the good purposes which he had inspired into his hart, he would also vouchsafe, to bring to a finall end and accomplishment. being therefore replenished with a certain excessiue gladnes, he began to accuse himselfe of too much pusillanimity: whervppon forsaking his caue, and casting away all manner of feare, he tooke his way straight to *Asisium* Where being espied of the Cittizens, and by the change of his countenance obserued to be wholly chaunged in minde, he was thereby of them adiudged to be out of his wittes: in so much as taking vp the dirt and stones of the streete, they began to throw the same at him, as though he had ben frantique and absolutely made indeed. But the seruant of God nothing at all dismayed, or changed with so many iniuries, passed on as a deafe man amidst them all. And When his father heard such a clamorous outcrie, he also presently running forth, not with a minde to  
free



Mat. 5.

free him but rather to destroy him: setting all commiseration quite aparte, drew him home to his house, where first with wordes. and afterwards with stripes and bondes he did in lamentable manner torment him. But he became thereby more prompt and couragious to proceed forward in his course begunne: remembring the saying of the Gospell, that: *Blessed are they that suffer persecution for iustice: for theirs is the Kingdome of heauen.*

But it fell out not long after, that his Father being gone out of the Country, his mother not allowing of her husbands severity, and being her self quite out of hope to alter her sonnes inflexible constancie. dismissed him quite of his bondes, and gaue him leaue to depart. Who redring due thaks vnto Almighty God, returned againe to the place where he was before, But his Father not finding him at his comming home, and angry with his wife, went after furiously to the place: purposing if it were past his power to recall him, at the least yet to drine him out of the province. Neuerthelesse Saint Francis receaving strength from God came forth of his owne acorde to meete his Father, all the violence of his fury notwithstanding, affirming boldly vnto him, that he did not esteeme his fetters and stripes, and furthermore protesting therewithall that for the loue of Christ hee was ready ioyfully to susteyne all manner of afflictions and evils whatsoever, Wherevpon his Father being intraged as hauing now no hope to recall his sonne, converted all his care to recover the mony? which being found at lenght in a litle windowe,

his



his fury was in some sorte appeased, the thirst of covetousnes, beeing (as it were) by a draught of mony alayd. After this his Father, endeavoured to bring his sonne (thus dispoyled of his mony?) before the Bishop of the City, that in his presence he might renounce his right vnto all his Fathers possessions, & might also restore vnto him all that ever he had. To the performance wherof, the true lover of povertie shewed himselfe both ready and willing. For coming before the Bishop, without any delay, or lingring whatsoeuer, neither contradicting with wordes, nor yet did he expect any to be spoken vnto him: presently putting off eve his garments, restored them to his father. At what time the holy man was founde to haue a shirte of hearecloth next to his skinne, which he concealed vnder his more delicate apparell. Furthermore out of an admirable fervour of spirit casting off all his apparell, he stood all naked before the company: and addressed his speech vnto his Father, thus: *Hitherto haue I called you my Father in earth, but from hence forth I shall securely say: Our Father which are in heauen: in whom I haue reposed all my treasure: & haue settled the whole summe of my hope and confidence.* The Bishop beholding all this, and admiring such an excessive fervour of pietie, in the man of God arose forth with from where hee sat: and embracing him in his armes with teares, as hee was a good and godly man, did also wrappe him in his owne garment: commanding his seruantes, to giue vnto him something to cover his naked body. But they gaue him a poore and base mantell.

which



which they had of a husband man, that served the Bishop: which he accepting with great thankfullnes, did with a peice of lime which he founde in the place, mark vpon it the forme of the Crosse with his owne hand, fashioning it, as a fit covering for a poore man crucified, and litle better than naked. Thus therefore was the servant of the highest King, left all in nakednesse, that he might follow his naked Lord crucified, whom he so dearely loved, in this manner fortifying himselfe with the Crosse, that he might commit his soule to the secure harbour of salvation, by the which he might safely escape the shippwracke of this tempestuous world.

From thence forth this contemner of the world being altogether freed from the bondes of worldly desires: forsaking the Citty, did with great security and freedome of minde, betake himselfe vnto the secret parts of the desert: that there in solitarie & silence, he might attend vnto the mysticall secrets by Almighty God from aboue distilled vnto him. And as this devout servant of God passed by a certaine wood singing praises vnto God with great ioye and exultation: a sorte of thieues came rushing out of a secret place vpon him. Who demaunding of him with fierce behaviour, what he was, the man of God answered with great confidence, and not without an instinct also of prophecy, I am the preacher of the great King. But they heaping blowes vpon him, cast him into a pitt filled vp with snowe, saying vnto him: Ly thou there Clowne, the preacher



cher of God. But so soone as they were departed, he got him speedily out of the pit againe: and being marveilously possessed with ioy, began with a lowder voice to sounde forth throughout the woodes, his songes of praise vnto the Creatour of all. And comming to a certaine religious house thereby, he asked almes as a beggar: and receaved the same as one vnknown and dyspyed. Fro thence going on along, he came to *Eugubium*: Where being of an old frend of his both known and entertained, he receaued a poore coate of his guiste, as one of the poore litle ones of Christ. From thence, being a louer of all manner of humility, he applied himself to the leapers: & remayned with them, seruing them most diligently for the loue of God. He washed their feet, bounde vp their vlcers, wrung out the corruption of their soares, and wiped away the filthines of them. He also kissed their running botches with admirable devotion, being now in the way shortly to become an Euangelicall Phisitian. By these meanes he obtained so great power of God, that he wrought wonderfull effects in the purging both of spyrituall and corporall diseases.

Among many of that kinde, here will Inow make reporte of one, which beseell, when the same man of God had afterwarde begunne to be of greater note in the world, there was a mā in the Country of *Spulerum*, who had his mouth & iawe bone miserably eaten away with an horrible disease such as no art of Physicke was able to cure: wherefore having bin to visite the Church

Behold  
again his  
pilgrimage  
to holy  
places.

of



*S. Francis  
repaired  
three  
Churches  
with the  
almes of  
the faith-  
ful. There-  
fore it is a  
good work  
and plea-  
sing to  
God.*

of the Apostles to craue the help of their meritts, it happened that in the way of his returne from pilgrimage, he met with this holy servant of God. At what tyme when as he would for very deuotiō haue kissed the footesteeps of his feete, the humble man, in no sorte permitting the same, kissed the mouth of him that would gladely haue kissed his feet. But so soone as Sainct Francis, had with a marveillous piety, once with his sacred mouth touched that horrible and loathsome soare, the malice forthwith of the disease departed, and the diseased man presently attained his wished health and recouery. Herein I know not whether more to admire, either the perfection of so great humility, in so charitable a kisse, or the excellencie of his vertue, in so wonderfull a miracle.

But let vs come to our intended purpose: this holy man Saint Francis being firmly established in Christian humility, recalled againe to his due obedience to be exhibited in performance of the worke from the Crosse enioyned vnto him, concerning the repairing of Saint Damians Church & as a true obedient servant he returneth back to *Assisum*, that at the least by beginning, he might cōpasse so much as might suffice to performe the commaundement of God. For which cause putting aside all bashfullnes for the loue of Christ crucified, he was willingly contented to begg of them, amongst whome he was wont to liue in great aboundance: offering his wearied body, now wasted much with fasting, to the carrieng of heavy stones towards the repaire of the  
buil-



ding. This Church therefore being finally repaired, by the help of God & good devotion of the Cittysens, least that his body should after labour waxe wanton cōdemning idleneffe, he settled himselfe to the repaying of a certaine other Church dedicated to the holy Apostles. *Peter* the same being distant somewhat further off from the City: thereof he made rather his choice, in regard of speciall devotion without of the purity of sincer faith he bare to the prince of the Apostles. This Church being at the length finished: he came vnto the place called *Portiuncula*: wherein was a Church builded to the blessed virgin Mother of God, but at that time decayed desolate & not regarded of any. Which the man of God seeing, to be thus forsakē: did for the fervent devotiō which he carried towards this B. mother begane to make his daily residence there, for the repaying of the same Church also. And perceiving that according to the name therof, which was from ancient time, called *S. Mary of Angels*, there appeared oftentimes Evangelicall visions: there did he sett vp his rest, and finall purpose of abode, as well for the reuerence of the Angels, as for the singular loue which he bare to the Mother of Christ. This place the holy man loyed aboue all other places of the world. For here he beganne in humility, heere he proceeded in integritie, heere he made his end in felicity: this place at his death he commended to his brethren, as most dere to the blessed virgin. Of this place a certaine devout brother did a litle before his con-



version behold a vision very worthy of relation. There appeared vnto him an innumerable company of blinde men, standing within the Compasse of this Church: all of them having their faces directed towards heaven, and their knees bowed downe to the ground: who stretching forth their handes on high, cried out to God in pittiful manner, desiring him of mercy, and reioying of their sightes. And behold there came a great light from heave, which spreading it self through them all, restored vnto enery one of them their perfect sightes, and healthe, according as they had before desired. This is the place wheare *S. Francis* by the instinct of divine revelation, beganne the order of the Friers Minors. For by the appointmēt of Gods heauēly providence, wherby the servant of Christ was directed in all things, he erected three materiall Churchs, before the beginning of his Order he did apply himself to the preaching of the Gospell, that he might not only ascend, as it were by degrees, frō things sensible, vnto things intelligible, & from matters of lesser moment to things of farre greater perfection: but that he might also foretell, as it were in a mistery, by some sensible worke, what he was heareafter to do. For like as the triple building was repayred by means of that holy man, so according to the same, forme rule & doctrine by him prescribed, the Church of Christ was in three sortes to be renewed, in a threefold triumphant armie of the elect, according as we do now see to be accomplished.



## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

*Of the institution of his order of Religion, and of  
the approbation of his Rule.*

**T**HIS singuler seruant of God, *S. Francis*, now making his abroad in the Church of the most blessed virgin Mother, and standing with continuall sighes before Her, who in her wombe conceived the word, replenished with grace and truth, desiring with vnspcakable affection, that she would vouchsafe to be come his aduocate: by the meritts of the mother of mercy, he did conceiue and bring foorth, the spirit of Euangelicall truth. For one day hearing Masse of the Apostles, with great deuotion: that Ghospell was read wherein Christe sending his Apostles to preache, prescribeth vnto them an Euangelicall forme of liuing: to witt, *that they possesse no gold, nor siluer, nor mony in their purses, nor Scripp for the Way, nor two coats, neither yet to beare either shoes vppon their feete, or a rodde in their hand.* All which wordes, this vnfaigned friend of Apostolicall pouerty, hearing, vnderstanding & to heedefull memory, commending: & feeling also inwardly in himselfe, an incredible ioy & contentation, This is (quoth he) the thing I doe coner, this is the same, which with all my whole harte, and soule, I desire. His shoes did he therfore loose from his feete, his staffe he layd aside, his wallet he reiected, and mony he vtterly abandoned: thus resting contented with one only coate, refusing also his letherne belt, in steade of a girdle he toke

*Math. 10.*



a coarde, applying all the diligence of his heart, how he might most duely performe the things he had heard, and might in all things conforme himselfe to the exact rule of Apostolicall perfection. From this time the man of God by divine inspiration beganne to be a studious emulator of Evangelicall perfection, and to invite others vnto Penitance with him. His speeches were in no wise vaine, neither yet such as might Minister cause of laughter, but evermore full fraught with the power of the Holy Ghost, penetrating even into the secret partes of the harte: by force whereof he wrought not a litle astonishment in the mindes all such as heard him. He preached alwaies peace, vnto the people, and in the beginning of his exhortation, he was wonte in this manner to salute them, saying: *Our Lord give his peace vnto you.* For this manner of salutation he learned of God: according as himself afterwards affirmed. And there vpon it came to passe, that according to the saying of the Prophet, himselfe also being inspired with the spirit of prophesy, he did denounce peace he did preach salvation, and did with healthfull admonition, associate very many vnto the true peace: euen such as had binne before time disioyned much from the favour of Christe, and had thereby strayed farr away from the porte of Salvation.

Now therefore when this holy servant of God did growe to be better knowne vnto many as well for the truth of his sincere doctrine, as of his life: certaine other man also moved by his example, beganne



beganne to be animated and stirred vp vnto Pen-  
 nance, and reiected all the impediments of this  
 world, that they might be conioyned vnto him,  
 both in habite and life, The first of which num-  
 ber, was the venerable man, *Bernardus* who be the  
 special vocatiō of God, merited to be the first borne  
 of the blessed Father aswell in priority of time, as  
 in priuilege of holy conversation. For he having  
 had experience of the holinesse of the seruant of  
 Christ, and purposing by his example perfectly to  
 contemne the world, demaunded of him direc-  
 tion for the better performance of his purpose.  
 Which the seruant of God vnderstanding, was re-  
 plenished, with great consolation of the holy-  
 Ghost, for the conception of this his sonne, & said  
 vnto him, that this counsell was to be sought at  
 the hands of God. Whetefore betimes in the mor-  
 ning, they entered into the Church of *S. Nicolas*  
 and there after humble prayers, exhibited the de-  
 vout seruant of the blessed Trinity *S. Francis*, three  
 severall times opened the booke of the Gospells,  
 instantly beseeching Almighty God, that by a  
 triple testimony he would wouchsafe to confirme  
 the holy purpose of *Bernard*. In the first opening  
 therefore of the booke, he lighted vpon that place,  
 which saith: *If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that*  
*thou hast and give vnto the poore.* In the second: *Take*  
*nothing in the way.* But in the third: *If any man will*  
*come after me, let him denie himself, and take vp his Crosse*  
*and follow me.* This is (saith the holy man) our life  
 and Rule: and of all them who will conioyne the  
 selues to our society. So therefore, if thou wilt

*Mat. 19. 21*  
*Marc. 6. 8*  
*Ma. 16. 24*



be perfect, and performe the thinges thou hast heard delivered.

Not long after, it fell out, that five other men also were called by the same spirit, whereby the nūber of the spirituall children of holy S. Francis, was increased to sixe: among whom the third place befell vnto the Holy Father *Aegidius*, a mā also full of Gods grace, & worthy to be held in famous memory. For being afterwards most rarely exercised, in heavenly vertus according as the seruāt of God, had foretold of himself, although he were a simple and vnlearned man, yet was he exalted, vnto the top of Celestiall contemplation. For continuing long time togeather without intermission, intentive vnto heavenly actions, he was raviſhed also with so frequent exceſſe of contemplation in God: as I my ſelf have with mine eies observed, that he was eſteemed rather to haue led the life of Angels, then of men, though living and couerſing among men.

Aboute the ſame very time vnto a certaine Priest of *Aſiſum*, named Sylueſter, a man of honeſt life and conuerſation, our Lord vouchſafed to ſhew a viſion, very worthy to be remembred For finding in himſelf, an eſpeciall loathing and avertedion from the manner & life of S. Francis and his brethren, leaſt that he might haply be indangered for the raſhnes of his iudgement, thus was he viſited by the favour of Gods heavenly grace. He beheld in his ſleep the whole Citty of *Aſiſum* to be environed rownde with a moſt rous Dragon, by reaſon of the vnmeaſurable hugenes whereof

the



the whole country seemed to be in danger of utter wast and destruction. After this he might see a certaine Crosse of gold, issuing forth of the mouth of *S. Francis*, the topp whereof reached vnto heauen, and the armes to the vtter most bounds of the worlde: at the glittering aspect wherof, that ougly and horrible Dragon, was vtterly put to flight, This vision being three times in this manner represented vnto him, he therevpon esteeming it as the very Oracle of God, declared the same in order to the man of God, and his brethren: and it was not long after, but himselfe also leaving the world, did with such perfection adheare vnto the footesteeps of Christ, that the life by him ledd in the order, gaue good credit and authority, to the vision he had seene in the world. Vpon the report and publication whereof, no whitt was the man of God ezalted in humaine glory: but acknowledging the benefits of God and the greatnes of his goodnes, he was more and more incouraged to withstād the craffe of the auncient enemye, and therewithall to preach and extoll the glory of the Crosse of Christ. But it befell vnto him vpon a day, that walking in a certaine solitary place, and there recounting with himselfe his yeares mispent: as he did in the bitternes of his harte bewaile them, the glad some comfort of the Holy Ghost comming then vpon him, he was fully certified of the plenarie remission of all his offences. And being afterwarde rapt as it were aboute himselfe, and having his vnderstanding marveilously inlightened, he evidently



perceyved, what great matters were in tyme to come to be fall vnto himsele and his whole progenie after him. Whervpon returning vnto his brethren: Be of good comfort (quoth he) my most dearly beloved, and reioyce in our Lord; & be in no wile eyther sad or sorrowfull, for that yee be but few in number, neyther yet be yee desmayed eyther out of myne, or your owne simplicity: for so much as our Lord hath certainly revealed vnto me, that he will make vs increase to a great and mighty companie; and will with the sweeter blessing of his heavenly grace, multiply and augment our number many and sundrie wayes.

At the same time also another devout man entered the religion among them; whereby the issue of the man of God did now amount vnto seaven. Then the good Father calling all his children about him: and speaking many things vnto them of the kingdome of God, of the contempt of the world, of the denying of their owne will, and of the chastisement of the body, withall declared vnto them his purpose to send them into the foure partes of the world. For now the holy simplicity, of the holy Father, having brought forth seaven children, did also desire to beget the whole company of the faithfull vnto Christ our Lord, by calling them to the mournfull works of Pennance. Go your waies (quoth he sweet father to his wel-beloved children) and denouncing peace vnto men: preache vnto them Pennance for the remission of sinnes. Be patient in tribulations, be watchful



tull in prayers, be vnweariable in labours, be mo-  
 dest in your speeches; be graue in your manners,  
 and ever thankfull for benefits receaved, confi-  
 deting that in lieu of all these things, the goodnes  
 of God hath prepared for you an eternall King-  
 dome. But they humbly prostrating themselves  
 vpon the earth before the servant of God, did  
 with great gladnes of spirite embrace the com-  
 mandement of holy obedience. Moreover, vnto  
 every of them aparte, he said: *Cast thy care vpon*  
*our Lord, and he will nourish thee.* Which admonitiō  
 he was ever wount to vse, so often as he went a-  
 bout to induce any brother vnto obedience. Then  
 he, forseing himselfe to be geuen as a patterne &  
 example vnto others, and so consequently that  
 he ought first to performe the thing before he  
 drew others to imitation: taking one of his com-  
 panions vnto him, settled himselfe towatdes one  
 part of the world, deputing the other sixe by two  
 & two together, severed in the forme of a Crosse,  
 to the other three partes of the earth. But it was  
 not long past, before the tender harted Father  
 much longing for the presence of his deare chil-  
 dren, and having no meane by himselfe to bring  
 them all together: did offer vp his prayers vnto  
 God that he would vouchsafe to effect his desire,  
 Who doth congregate the dispersed of Israel. And  
 so it came to passe, that according to his desire,  
 without any call of man, by the only worke of  
 God, they met all in one place together vnlooked  
 for, not without the great admatation of them all.  
 Having in this space of time gathered vnto them,

fouer

Psalm. 54.

Psalm. 46.



fewer other men also of honest fame, whose ad-  
hearing vnto them: made their number now to  
be twelve.

Now the servant of Christ, perceyving that  
the number of his brethren, was by litle & litle  
daily encreased, wrote for himselfe and them, in  
playne wordes, a rule and forme of life, wherein  
hauing laid the obseruance of the Holy Ghospell,  
for an indissoluble foundation, he had also inser-  
ted therevnto certaine other few things, such as  
seemed most necessary, for an vniforme manner  
& course of liuing. And desiring to haue the same  
approued by the Chiefe Pastour of the Church:  
he determined with that small company of simple  
associates, to take his way to the Sea Apostolique,  
reposing all his trust in the only direction and  
help of God. Who from his heauenly seate, be-  
holding the finall end of his desire, vouchsafed by  
the shewing of this manner of vision vnto him, to  
reare vp the mindes of his companions, otherwise  
not a litle astonished, out of the consideraation of  
their owne simplicity. For, it seemed vnto him,  
that passing by a certaine way, he beheld standing  
nigh vnto him a goodly Tree of stately height &  
loftines: which as he approached more nigh vn-  
to it, and did stand vnder the same in admiration of  
the height thereof. he was suddenly by the power  
of God, lifted vp into so great a height of the aire,  
that he did not only reach to the very top thereof,  
but did also with great facility bow it downe, fro  
the vpper most parte, to the ground. This vision  
the man of God vnderstanding to be a foretoked



ning of the fauourable inclination of the Apolto-  
 lical dignity to his humble desires; was exhilarated  
 much in spirit therewithall: and comforting his  
 brethren in our Lord, betooke himselfe to his  
 journey with them. But when he was come to  
 the Court of Rome, and brought before the face  
 of the supream Bishop, the Vicar of Christ being  
 the walking in the Pallace of *Laterane*, in the place  
 which is called *speculum*, and there possessed with  
 profounde meditations, repelled the seruant of  
 Christ, as a man vnknown, not without some  
 thew also of discontentment. Who humbly de-  
 parting out of the doores, in the night follow-  
 ing this manner of revelation was by Almighty  
 God made to the Pope himselfe. He saw from be-  
 tweene his feete a palme branch springing out of  
 the ground, & the same to become an ost beauti-  
 full Tree. And marueiling with himselfe what  
 this vision should meane: his minde was illumi-  
 nated by the worke of God, that by this palme  
 tree that poore man was signified, whom he had  
 the day before reiected. The next morning ther-  
 fore, he caused his servants to seeke him through-  
 out the Citty. Who hauing found him in the Ho-  
 spital of *S. Antony* neare vnto *Laterane*, he coman-  
 ded them forthwith to bring him before himselfe.  
 Thus S. FRANCIS, being brought in pre-  
 sence of the Pope, disclosed vnto him the whole  
 course of his purpose: humbly and instantly ma-  
 king sute vnto him. to approue the same methode  
 and rule of liuing. The Vicar of Christ, Pope *In-*  
*nocent* the third, being a man of singular wisdom  
 obseruing



observing in the man of God, an admirable purity of a simple minde, the constancy also of his purpose, and the fiery zeale of his holy desire: embraced this poore one of Christ with the loue of his harte, being much inclined in minde, to yeeld his favourable assent to the humble petition of this holy man. But yet deferred to ratifie the requests of the poore servant of Christ: for that his demaund seemed vnto some of the Cardinals, to be both a matter of novelty, and also of difficultie, beyond the measure of mans habilitie.

But it happened at that time to be among the Cardinals, a reverend man called *Dominus Ioannes de sancto Paulo*, Bishop of *sabina*, a lover of all holynesse, and an especiall helper of the poore servants of Christe, who inflamed with the spirit of God, delivered his mind in the matter before the Pope and his brethren, to this effect. If we shall saith he, deny the request of this poore man, as a matter either of novelty, or of too much difficultie, whereas he requireth none other thing but a form of Euangelicall life, to be confirmed vnto him: we haue iust cause to feare, least therein we doe offend against the Gospell of Christ. For who soeuer shall assume that any thing which is either newe, vnrasonable, or imposible to be observed, is contained within the observance of Euangelicall perfection, or within the yowe which is made thereof: he is manifestly convinced of blasphemy against Christ himselfe, the very Author of the Gospell, Thus much being spoken



in this behalf: the Successour of the Apostle S. Peter, turning himselfe towards the servant of Christ said vnto him, Offer vp thy praier deere sonne, vnto Christe, that by thee he may vouchsafe to shewe his will vnto vs, to the end that it being once, more certainly knowen, we may the more securely condescende to thy godly desires. Wherevpon the servant of Almighty God, bestowing himselfe now wholly in praier, by his instant devotion obtayned to knowe, both what him-selfe shoulde exteriorly disclose, and what the Pope should interiorly conceyue. For having related a parable according as he had receaved the same from God, of a rich and mighty King, that willingly married with a beautifull, though a very poore woman, and of a noble issue begott betwixt them bearing liuely resemblance of the KING his Father, and in that respect very worthy to be nourished at the KINGES owne table: this also by way of interpretation hee therevnto adioyned. Wee haue no cause to feare, that the Sonnes and heires of the Eternall KING, shall perishe and die for hunger, who beeing borne of a poore Mother, by the power of the HOLIE GHOST to the image of CHRIST their KING, are also to bee gotten vnto him in a poore religion by the spirite of povertie. For if the KING of HEAVEN doe promise an eternall Kingdome to them that followe him: howe much more will hee provide them of things of necessity which he giveth indifferently

not



not only to the good, but also to the wicked: This parable and the meaning thereof, when the Vicar of Christ had diligently heard & observed, he marvelled greatly therat: & knew for certain, that it was undoubtedly, Christ himselfe, who covertly spake in the man. And moreover also he avowed by the instinct of Gods heavenly spirit, that a certaine vision also which he had about this time receyued from heaven, should be in this man accomplished. For he had seene in his sleepe as himselfe reported, the Church of *Literane*, to be in present danger, now forthwith to fall to the ground: the which a certain poore mā; of mean stature, & contemptible to behold, putting his own back vnder it did so preserve frō falling. Whereupon he thus pronounced: *Verely this is he, who by his worke & doctrine, shall uphold the Church of Christ.* Then this prudent Pastor being wholly fraught with devotion inclined himself in every degree to the desires of the servant of Christ: & bare evermore vnto him a speciall loue & affection. Wherefore he graunted his request, & promised to graunt yet more vnto him, he approued his Rule, he gaue him in Charge to vndertake the preaching of penance, & for all the lay brethré to that were associate the seruāt of Christ he caused them to haue litle crownes made that they might freely preach the word of God.

THE FORTH CHAPTER.  
*Of the increase of the Order vnder his hand, and of the confirmation of the Rule formerly approued*

THE holy man Saint Francis, now thus supported with Gods grace, and Papall authority, did



did with much confidence of minde, take his way to the vale of *Spoletum*; that he might, as well by deed as by worde, denounce the Gospel of Christ. But as he debated with his companions in the way, by what meanes they might in all sincerity obserue the Rule, by them newly vndertaken, and how they might in all manner of holinesse and iustice, walke before the face of God, and further yet, how they might not only arise to greater profit in themselves, but might also be an example and guide vnto others, by long protracting this manner of conference, the time suddenly ouerpassed vnawares. And they being now much wearied with the long continuance of their travel, and hungry also therewithall, were inforced to stay, in a certaine solitary place of the desert. At which very time and place they haing no kind of meanes to provide themselves, of necessary food, then did the providence of God manifest it self in their behalf. For suddenly a man appeared vnto them, bringing bread in his hand, which he gaue vnto the poore ones of Christ: and forth disappeared, being altogether, vnknewen from whence he came, or whether he went. Here by the poore brethren perceyving that in the company of the man of God, they were assisted with the help of Gods heavenly protection, were better refreshed by the gift of this diuine liberality, then by the refection of their empirie bodies. And moreover they were so singularly replenished with the consolation of God that they firmly purposed, and irrevocably decreed, neuer for any



violence either of hunger or tribulation: to faile from the promise of holie pouertie.

After this returning with this holie purpose into the vale of *Spoletum* they beganne to dispute among themselves whether it were more expedient for the to conuerse among men, or to betake theselues vnto solitarie places. But the seruant of Christ *S. Francis*, not presuming vpon the industrie either of himselfe or of his bretheren: determined by instancy of praier, to seeke the good will and pleasure of God in this behalfe. Being therefore inlightened by the oracle of diuine reuelation, it was given him to vnderstand, that he was for this very purpose sent of God, that he might gaine such soules vnto Christ, as the Diuell endeauoured to leade astray. For which cause he rather chose to liue for the generall good of all, than for the private benefite of himselfe alone: being therevnto provoked by his example who being, but one voulded to die for all. The man of God therefore, together withall the rest of his companions, betooke himself to a certaine forlorne Cottage nigh to *Assisium*: Wherin they liued in much labour and needines, according to the rule of holy poverty: desiring rather to be sustayned with the foode of teares, than with the nice of curiosities of delicate fare. For there they were incessantly busied in fervent praiers proceeding rather from mentall affection, thā outwardly disclosed by vocall wordes, intending wholly to the studie of devotion, because they had not as yet any Ecclesiasticall bookes, where in they might



might sing there Canonical howers, but in-  
steede of them; they behelde continuallie the  
booke of the Crosse of Christ, and turned it over  
day and night; thereto instructed by the example  
and speach of the holie father, who daily prea-  
ched of Christ his Crosse vnto them.

But being requested of his brethren to teach  
them how to pray; he said: when you doe pray,  
you shal say the *Pater noster*: and this also: *we adore  
thee the O Christ at al thy Churches, which are in the  
whole worlde, and we blesse thee because by thy holie Crosse  
thou hast redeemed the worlde.* Moreover, he taught  
them to praise our Lord in al thinges and out of al  
his creatures: to vse especial reverence also to-  
wardes Priests: and principally this; firmelie to  
beleue, and simply to confesse, the puritie of  
faith according vnto such manner & forme, as  
the holie *Romane Church* doth hold and teach.  
All which precepts of the holy Father they on  
their parts in every, point inviolably observed,  
and at all Churches and before all Crosses which  
they could see a farr of, they did humbly pro-  
strate themselves according to the forme pre-  
scribed vnto them.

But it so fell out, that the brethren long time  
abiding in the foresaid place: the holy man, went  
forth vpon a Saterday, into the City of *Assisum*  
with purpose vpon a Sunday morning early to  
preach (as his costome was) in the Cathedrall  
Church. And as the devout man of God had with  
drawen himselfe, into a certaine throud, that  
stoode within the Channons garden, there over-

*Heere thou  
maist see  
that faith  
to be held  
and confes-  
sed whsch  
the holy  
Romane  
Church  
doth hold  
and teach.  
They fell  
downe  
prostrate  
praying at  
all Churches  
& Crosses.*



passing the night, according to his vsuall manner in the praier of God; albeit that he were then in bodie absent from his children. Behold yet even aboute the verie pointe of midnight, some of the bretheren being bent to sleepe, and some other of them continuing in praier, a fierie chariote of marveilous splendoure, entring in at the dore, of the house, whirled vp and downe the place, one while one way, and one while another, vntill it had at length, gone three severall times rounde about the roome: vpon the toppe whereof, might be seene to rest, a globe of shining beames, as bright as the sunne; which caused the darke some night, for the time to seeme, as cleere as the day. Heerewith all, the watchfull were amased, and the sleepey both waked and astonished: every of them finding nolesse clearenes in their harts, than outwardly vpon their bodies, it being effected by the power of this marvailous light, that the naked consciences of them all were discovered one to another. For they did all of them agreeably vnderstand, every of them seing into each others harte, that the holy Father being absent in body, but present in spirit, and in such apparence transfigured: was with the beames of brightnes from aboue inlightened and inflamed, and out of supernaturall power, in a shining and fiery Chariot, by God represented vnto them, that as true Israelites, they might follow after him, who as an other *Elias* was by God ordained, to be the Chariot, and Chariot Driver of spirituall men. And verily good cause we haue to belieue, that he who

opened

4. Reg.

2. 11:



opened in former time, the eies of a Boie, wherby to see the mountaine filled all with horses and fiery Chariots, in compasse of *Aeliseus*: did now also, at the prayers of his holy Servant Saint FRANCIS, in like manner, open the eies of this simple company, that they might see and behold, the woonderfull workes of God. But the holy man after this returning vnto his brethren, beganne to sift the secrets of their consciences, to refresh their spirits vpon occasion of this marvelous vision, and to foretell many things concerning the increase of the Order. At what time disclosing vnto them many and sundry points, which far surpassed all humane vnderstanding: the brethren well perceyued, that the spirit of our Lord, had in so great aboundance; settled it selfe vpon this his servant Saint FRANCIS; that it should be their safest and most certaine course to imitate his life and doctrine.

After this, S. FRANCIS, the Pastor of that litle flock, being guided and directed by the grace of God, conducted this poore number of twelve brethren, to the Church of Saint *Mary of Portiuncula*: to the end that where the order of the Friars Minors, had by the merits of the Mother of God taken his beginning; there also by her helpe, it might take increate. And in this place also, being made a preacher of the Gospell, he went about preaching through the Citties and townes: *Not in the learned words of humane wisdom*, but in the power of the spirit, denowcing the Kingdome of God. He seemed vnto all that sawe him to be a

4. Reg. 6. 7



*Of Virgins  
were con-  
verted by  
him to im-  
brace per-  
petuall  
chastity:  
false it is  
that it is  
impossible  
to keepe  
virginity.*

*S. Clare  
now glori-  
fied in  
heaven is  
worthily  
worshipped  
in earth  
of the  
Church.*

man of another world: for as he was allwayes, intentiue to heaven, both in minde and countenance, so did he seeke with his whole endeavour to draw all men thither with him. And even now about this time, beganne the vineyard of Christ to bud forth the buds of the sweete smells of our Lord: and having brought forth the flowers of sweetnes, Honor, and Honestie, did yeild a plentifull and fruitfull harvest. For many, both men and women, inflamed with the zeale of his preaching, serving our Lord in the Chastitie of wedlock, according to the forme receaved, of the servant of God; did binde themselves vnto new lawes of Pennance, whose manner of living the said servant of Christ decreed to be named *The Order of the brethren of Pennance*. For, as the way of pennance, is one and the very same vnto all such as desire to come vnto heaven, so likewyse this order, admitting both the Clergie and the lay pepple, Virgins, and Married folkes, of both sexes, of how great merit it is in the sight of God; it is manifest by many miracles, which some of them haue wrought, as may be knowne to the world.

Even now also, diuers Virgins were by him converted vnto perpetuall chastity, among which Saint Clare that notable Virgin and most deare to God, was the first plant and most beautifull blossom of all the rest: who as a pure springing flower gaue a sweet savour of holynesse; and glimmered forth her beames as a bright shining star. she being now glorified with God in heaven, is  
worthely



worthely honored of the Church in earth: who being the daughter in Christ, of the holy poore Father Saint FRANCIS, did also become the Mother of the poore: And many not only moved with devotion, but inflamed with desire of Christian perfection, contemning the vanity of wordly things, did follow the steeps of Holy S. Francis. Who increasing daily more & more were quickly spreede forth to the end of the world. For that same holy poverty, which was the only thing they desired to carrie with them, for the defray of their charges, made them evermore ready, vnto all obedience, strong in sustaining of labours, and nimble in prosecuting their iourneis. And for so much as they possessed no earthly thing, nothing did they loue nothing, did they feare to loose: but were in every place secure, never assailed with feare, never distracted with care, wherby living as men in every point free from all manner of trouble of minde, they had patience in expectance, of their morning and nightly sustenance.

Many and sundry reproaches they sustained in diuerse parts of the world, as men contéptible and vnknown: but the loue of the Gospell of Christ, had endewed them with so perfect patience, that they sought in those places rather to be, were they might suffer persecution in body. than where, vpon observation of their vnfained holinesse, they might haue occasion to glory in the fauour of the world. And even that very penury of all things which they continually sustayned



seemed vnto them a superaboundant plenty: meane while that according to the wisemans Councell. *In steed of a great thing, the least did contente them.* For some of the brethren comming into the infidells countries, it happened that a certaine *Saracin*, moved with pittie, offered them mony for their necessary foode: which he perceiving them to refuse, wondered not a litle thereat, seeing them notwithstanding to be both poore and needy. But at the lenght perceiuing, that having voluntarily made themselues poore for the loue of God, they would possesse no mony: he was thereby conioyned vnto them, in so great loue and affection, that he offered to Minister vnto them all thinges necessary, so long as he should haue in the world to giue them. O inestimable price of poverty, by the admirable force whereof, even Barbarours cruelty, was chaunged into so great a sweetnes of mercy, Wherefore it is a thing most horrible and a wickednes vnexcusable, for a Christian man to tread vppon so pretious a pearle which an infidell *Saracin* held in so great a reverence.

About this time *Moricus*, a Religious man of the Order called *Cruciferi*, being miserably afflicted in an Hospital neare to *Asisium*, with a long and greivouse disease, through the violent force whereof, the Phisitions were in vtter despaire of his recoverie: made humble request to the man of God, by a messenger sent for purpose, with instant desire, that he would vouchsafe to pray for him. Whervnto, the blessed Father, with a willing minde assenting, after praier devoutly

made



made, taking certaine crummes of bread into his hand, and mingling the same with oyle, taken from out of the Lamp which burned before the Altar of the Blessed virgin, brought it at length, as it were, to a certaine kinde of electuary, which he sent vnto the sicke man, by the handes of his brethren, laying, Beere ye this medicine vnto our brother M O R I C Y S: where by the power of Christ, will not only restore him vnto perfect health againe, but will make of him a strong and hardy warriour, and shall further adioyne him perpetually, vnto our troupe and company: No sooner had this sicke, man tasted of that exquisite medecine, made & confected by the Holy Ghost his invention, but rising vp forthwith, now perfectly whole and well, he obtained of God so much strength both of body & minde, that within a litle while after, entring into the Religion of the holy man he was contended with one only slender coate, vnder which also he ware for long time together, a coate of maile next to his skinne, & vsed no other diet than raw meates, as hearbes fruits and such like other things as he gathered vpon the earth: not tasting for many and soundrie years, either of bread or wine. All which notwithstanding, he still continued in good health and strenght of body.

And as the merriits of the vertue of these litle ones of Christ did daily more and more increase so the sweet smell of their good opinion, spreading it self sonde about, drew many out of diuers parts of the world, to come in person to see the holy

*Behold the  
wonderfull  
abstinence  
of the holy  
man who  
for a long  
space tasted  
neither  
bread nor  
wine and  
was fed  
only with  
raw meates.*



Father. Among whom there was a curious inventor of secular songes, who having binne for that cause crowned by the Emperour, and called the king of verses determined to go see this man of God, the contemner of wordly things. And finding him preaching in a certaine Monastery, at the Castle of Saint SEVERINVS: the hand of our Lord comming then vpon him, he beheld Saint FRANCIS the preacher of the Crosse of Christ, ensigned with two swordes, one overthwart the other in the forme of a Crosse, the one of them stretched along from his head to his fete, and the other, Crosse-wise along his breast, from one hand to the other. Wherby although he knew not the countenance of the servant of Christ, yet was he fully secured that this very man was he, by the admirable apparence of so great a miracle. At the sodain aspect whereof being much amated he beganne to propose vnto himselfe better things in his minde: and being at the lenght compunct by the force of his words, no lesse than if he had bin stricken through with the sword of the spirit, issuing out of his mouth, vtterly contemning all secular pompes he conioyned himselfe in profession, with the blessed Father. Wherevpon the holy man, seeing him to be perfectly converted, from the trouble of the world, to the peace of Christ, called him by the name of *Frater Pacificus*. He afterward increasing in al holinesse, before such time as he was made provinciall Minister in France for he was the first that bare that office there merited once, and againe, to see the greeke letter 7. in



the forehead of holy *S. Francis*: the same being distinguished with such seemely variety of colours, as did wonderfully adorne his face and countenance. This signe the holy man did reverence with great affection; this signe he did commend with frequent speeches: and in his letters which he vtually dispatched, he evermore with his owne hand subscribed the same: as if all his study were to make the signe T according to the saieing of the Prophet vpon the foreheades of them that sighed and mourned, and were vnfaignedly converted to Christ.

Ezech. 9. 4

Now when the number of brethren, was in processe of time increased; the carefull Pastor, beganne to call them together vnto a general Chapter, then to beholden in the place of our Lady of *Portiuncula*: that in the measure of diuine distribution, he might giue vnto every one his portio of obedience, in the land of their poverty. Where although there were great penurie, and the brethren sometimes came together aboue fīue thousand in number: yet by the help of Gods mercie they had sufficient foode; together with health of body, and aboundance of spirituall ioy. But for so much as he could not be in body present at the provinciall Chapters, he was therefore in spirit, by the diligent care of his gouernement: by the instancy of prayer; and by the efficacy, of benediction; evermore present, at them: notwithstanding that sometimes, by the marvailous power and worke of God, he did visibly appeare. For as Saint *Anthony* that worthy preacher, who



is now a notable Confessour of Christ, was preaching in the Chapter at *Arles* of the ritle of the Crosse: *Iesus of Nazareth King of the Iewes*: a certaine brother of approued vertue, called *Monaldus*, looking, as the will of God was towards the Chapter house doore; sawe with his corporall eies the blessed Father Saint *FRANCIS* lifted vp alofte in the aire, ad blessing his brethren with his handes stretched out as it were in the forme of a Crosse. At which very time all the brethren did feelee themselves to be replenished with so great & vnvual a consolation of spirit, that the inward testimony which they felt in their hartes did sufficiently secure them of the vndoubted presence of the holy Father: though afterwardes it was, not only by evident signes, but also by the said holy Fathers owne wordes, externally confirmed. And well it may be believed that the same power of Almighty God, which granted the devout and holy Bishop Saint *Ambrose*, to be present at the intombing of the glorious Bishop Saint *Martin*, to the end that he might with devout reverence, honor the devout Bishop deceased: did also by an especiall favour, present his servant Saint *Francis*, at the sermon of his true preacher Saint *Anibany*: that he might approve the words of truth: those especially, of the Crosse of Christ. whereof himselfe was a continuall bearer, and a most faithfull servant.

But the Order being now great amplified & augmented, he did greatly desire, that the forme and rule therof by Pope *Innocencius* already appro-



ved, might be *Honorius* his successor, for ever be ratified and confirmed. and even then he was by Almighty God admonished, with this manner of revelation. It seemed vnto him that he was gathering vp from the earth, certaine most exceeding small and slender crummes of bread, by him to be distributed among a great many hungry brethren of his, that stood in expectance rownde aboute him, And fearing to distribute so small crummes, least perhaps they should fall out of his handes, he heard a voice from aboue, saing vnto him: *Francis*, make one host of all the crummes, and giue vnto them that will eate. Vnto which voice he shewing himselfe obedient y whosoever did not receiue the distribution devoutly, or did make light of the guilt already receaved, were presently marked with a leprous infection. All which the holy man did the next morning after, relate vnto his brethren: sorrowing much, that he could not vnderstand the mystery of the vision. But the next day following, as he persisted watchfull in praier, he heard a voice from heaven speke vnto him, *Francis*, the crummes which thou sawest in the night past, are the wordes of the Gospell, the host is the Rule, and the leprous iniquity. Being therefore desirous, before he sought the confirmation of his Rule, to reduce the same as being hitherto more largely compiled out of sundry parts of the Gospell, vnto a more compendious forme and methode, according as the vision did purporte vnto him: he went vpp with two of his companions into a certaine hill,

wher-



*He fasted  
with bread  
& water.*

*S. Francis  
caused his  
rule to be  
written as  
he had re-  
ceived by  
divine re-  
velation.*

wherevnto he was by the Holy Ghost conducted, and there contenting himselfe with bread & water, during the time of his fast he caused the same to be written, according to that which the spirit of God suggested vnto him, as he was yet persevering in fervent prayer. Which being there by him, in this manner finished, and himselfe now comming downe from the mountaine, he gaue the same to his Vicar to keepe: who within few daies, confessing himselfe to haue lost it, by fault of negligence, the holy man went againe, the second time, into the solitary place of the desert, & presently renewed the same againe: as if he had taken the wordes, from out of the mouth of God. And shortly after obtained, according to his owne desire to haue the same confirmed, by the foresaid Pope HONORIUS: in the eight yeare of his Popedome. Wherevpon taking occasion with great fervency to perswade his brethren a new to the observance of the rule, he avowed vnto them that he had not thereinto inserted any thing out of his owne industrie, but had simply and plainly written downe all & every point, eue in such sorte as had binne from God revealed vnto him. Which, that it might the more manifestly appeare, as being confirmed and approved by the testimony of God himselfe, within few daies after the signes & Marks of our Lord Iesus were imprinted vpon him, by the finger of the living God, as it were the Bull of the chiefe and most supream Bishop Christ himselfe as well to the absolute confirmation of the Rule, as also to the commendation of the



Author thereof as shall be hereafter set downe in convenient place, after we shall have declared his excellent vertues.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER  
Of the austerity of his life, and how the Creatures of  
God gaue sollace vnto him.

**N**Ovv when the holy servant of God Saint Francis, did perceive that many were by his exāple encouraged with fervencie of spirit to carry the Crosse of Christ: himselfe also, like a good leader of the army of Christ was therby animated daily more and more: to attaine vnto the crowne of victory, by the exquisite perfection of most invincible vertue. For cōsidering the saying of the Apostle; that, *They who are of Christ have crucified their flesh together with their vices and concupiscenses*: he to the ende he might in his owne body beare the armour of the Crosse, did with so great severitie of discipline, restraints his sensuall appetites, that scantely he allowed vnto himselfe, the very things that were necessary for the sustentation of nature. Vsing evermore this māner of saying, that, *It could not be but marvellous hard, to satisfie the necessities of the body, & yet not to condiscein vnto the euill inclination of sensuall desires*: for which cause, in time of health he would hardly be induced to eat of boiled meats, or at least wise very seldome: & if he did at any time, he vsed either to put ashes amongst it, or els by mingling of water with the sac, to make the meat

Se with  
what seue-  
rity of dis-  
ciplines  
the holy  
Father did  
manifeste  
the continen-  
ce of  
his flesh.  
Se also his  
stande fast  
abstinance  
in ymagi-  
ning

vnla-



vnfavoury. What shall I speake of his moderate drinking, when as he would scarcely drink of cold water, sufficient to alay the violence of his thirst. He ever invented new waies of more perfect abstinence, and by exercise did daily more & more increase therein: and although he had already attained vnto the highest degree of perfection, yet some thing alwaies he did as a new beginner innovate: punishing, with afflictions, his fleshy concupiscence. Nevertheless, at such times as he went abroad to preach the Gospell, he did conforme himselfe in the quality of his meate according to the custome of the persons that did entertaine him: but, at his returning home againe, then did he strictly obserue the rigour of most parsimonious abstinence. And so in all respects, vsing austerity towards himself, curtesie towards his neighbour, & obedience to the Gospell of Christ; he was an example of edification to others, not only by abstaining, but even also by eating. The bare ground he vsed most commonly, as a bed, for his wearied body: and tooke his sleep oftentimes sitting, leaning his head vpon a piece of woode, or a stone: and resting alwaies contented with one coate, he served our Lord in cold, and nakednesse.

Whetevpon. it being one time demaunded of him, how he could with so thinne a garment defende himselfe from the extreame sharpenesse of the winter cold, he answered with a fervour of spirit. If we were inwardly toucht by fervent desire with the flame of the heavenly coutry, we should easily be able to indure this eternall colde. He

could

*He slept  
often on  
the bare  
ground.*

*Behold his  
great au-  
st erity in  
his apparell.*



could not abide softnes of apparell, but asperous  
 clorthing he much esteemed; affirming that *S. Iohn*  
*Baptist* was in that respecte commended by the  
 mouth of God himselfe. And therefore, if at time  
 he found any kinde of easefulness in such garmens  
 as had bene given vnto him, he vsed to weare litle  
 cords into the inner side therof: alluding vnto the  
 words of truth, that softnes of apparell was not to  
 be sought for Cottages of the poore, but in prin-  
 ces pallaces. For he had learned by certaine expe-  
 riēce, that the diuels are terrefied by asperitie: but  
 by delicious nicenesse, more forciblely animated  
 to tentation. Wherevpon having on night (contrary  
 to his vsual custome a pilow of feathers at his head  
 in regard of a special infirmity which he susteined  
 generally in that parte, and particularly in his eies  
 the diuell entring therein, did till the howre of  
 Martins, wonderfully molest and trouble him,  
 from the study of holy praier, untill that at length  
 calling one of his bretheren vnto him, he caused  
 the same pilow together with the diuel in it, to  
 be carried quite away out of his Cell. But the  
 brother going out of the Cell therewithall, lost  
 the strength and vse of al his members: vntill by  
 the voise of the holie father, to whom it was re-  
 veiled in spirit, his former strength, both of harte  
 and body was fully restored vnto him againe.

He observed great rigour and discipline, and  
 stode with great heedfulness vpon his owne de-  
 fence: having an especiall care, for preservation  
 of the puritie of euerie man. Wherefore at the be-  
 ginning of his conversion, he vsed oftentimes,



even in the winter leason, to cast himselfe into a watter pitte, frozen ouer with ice: that so he might both perfectlie overcome his domesticalleemie; and might also. prelerue the white garment of chastitie, from the raging fire of voluptuouse pleasure. For he thought it more tolerable by much, and without al companison, for a spirituall man to sustaine great colde, in his body, then to feele neuer so smale a kindling of carnall pleasure, within his minde. But it hapned ypon a certaine night, that as he was praing within his Cell, in the deserte of *Sarthianum*, the ancient enemye did call him three severall times by his name, saying: *Francis, Francis, Francis*, who demanding of him, what he would haue, he craftelie replied in these wordes: *There is no sinner in the worlde, whom God will not pardon, vpon his conuersion vnto him: but he that shal kill him selfe with harde penance, shall neuer finde mercie at his hands.* The servant of God hearing this, had presentlie by revelation discovered vnto him, the whole drifte and devise of the wicked enemye: by what kinde of deceipt he went about to drawe him into a slacknes in devotion, as the event following, did evidently declare. For immediately after this, by the blaste of his mouth, *whose breath making burning coales to flame*, he was assailed with a great and greivous temptation, of the fleshe, comming then vpon him. Which so soone as this lover of chastitie did wel forsee, putting of his coate, he beganne very feircly to beate him selfe with a corde, saying goe to brother Assc, thus doth it beseme thee to continue

lob. 41.12

tinne



tinue, thus oughtest thou to indure the scourge.  
 Thy coate serveth for Religion, it beareth the  
 badge of holinesse: for it is lawfull for anie one  
 that is delighted in vnlawful lust, to intrude vpon  
 it: if any whither thou wouldest goe, then goe  
 thy waies. Moreouer also, being animated with  
 a most wonderfull seruour of spirite, opening  
 the doore of his Cell, he went his way forth into  
 the garden: and there casting downe his poore  
 naked bodie, into the deepe snowe, he caught  
 the same in his handes, and made thereof, seaven  
 heapes: which being orderly placed before him,  
 thus did he then speake to his outwarde man: loe  
 here (saith he) the bigger of these is thy wife,  
 these other foure, are thy two sonns, and thy two  
 daughters, and these two that remaine, are thy  
 seruantes thy man and thy maied, which thou  
 oughtest to haue to waite vpon thee. Haste thee  
 now therefore, and see thou forflow not to cloth  
 them al, for they are in present danger, to die for  
 colde. But if the manifold care, of these seaven  
 be over molestful vnto thee: then serue thine one  
 and onely Lord alone, with heedfull diligence.  
 The tempter forthwith perceiving himselfe by  
 this meanes to be subdued: departed straight a-  
 way, with shame enough, and the holie man, re-  
 turned with victorie into his Cell againe: for  
 while he exteriorly, afflicted his bodie with the  
 extremitie, of the painefull colde, which he in-  
 dured, he did so perfectlie extinguiſhe the heate  
 of his inwarde lust, that never had he after that  
 time, any feeling or touch thereof againe. But it

*The whole  
 purpos of  
 this holy  
 man was  
 to purg his  
 mind of  
 all Vices.*



chanced, that a brother among them, attending this meane while vnto praier, did by the light of the Moone, which then shined very bright moste plainly see and discerne, the whole course of all that had ben done. Which the man of God perceiving, and knowing that he had seene what had bene done in the night, related vnto him also, the manner of the tentation and straightly charged him there with all, that so long as him selfe lived he shoulde not disclose what he had seene, vnto any man in the worlde.

*The vices  
of the flesh  
are to be  
mortified  
and the  
instruments  
ther vnto  
ought to  
be bri-  
dled and  
the exter-  
nal fences  
with great  
diligence  
to be kepte.*

He did moreover teach, that in no wise it was sufficient onely to mortefie the vices of the flesh, by subduing the euil motions thereof: but that also the outward fences, by the which, death entred into the soule, were to be kept with great care and vigilancie in so much that the familiaritie, the conference, and sight of women, which vnto manie are oftentimes occasion of ruine, he commanded carefully to be avoided: affirming that by such occasions, as well the weake spirit is broken, as the strong also most commonly, not a litle weakened. And as harde would he say it was, for him that conversed among them, vnlesse he were a man of most singuler and approved honesty, to avoide the contagion of them as it is, according to the wordes of the Scripture. *to walke in the fire, and not to burne his feete.* For he himselfe had continually so averted his eies, from beholding of such maner of vanity: that as (he said sometime to one of his companions) there was hardlie that woman in the world whom he did knowe by the face



face. For he did not thinke it safe, to drawe inwardlie the images of those formes, into his minde: which might either reviuue the sparkles of the subdued flesh, or might els defile, the vnspotted clearenes of chaste and honest mindes. Wherevpon, he also affirmed, that al maner of speach with a woman was vtterlie vaine and frivolouse, except only in confession, or els for cause of instruction, & yet euen in these occasions the same to be done withal brevitie, such as shoulde be most expedient, for her salvation, and best agreeable with her honest reputation. For what busines would he say, can a religious man haue, where aboute to treat with a woman, saue onely in enioyning holy Pennance vnto her, or els in giving her counsell to refome her life, when she doth in religious maner require it. Out of too much securitie, the enemye is lesse avoided. And the diuell if he can get but one haire of a mans head, to be his owne, he wil soone make it to growe as big as a beame.

Idlenes also, he taught to be eschewed, as the very sinke and common receptacle, of al naughty thoughts: shewing by his owne example, that the rebellious and slothful flesh, was to be kept vnder by corinual discipline, and profitable labours. Wherefore he called his body, his brother Ass, for that it was to carrie hevie burthens, and to be beaten with manie and frequent strips: and not otherwise to be fed then with base & meane diet. If he saw anie idle or loitring person, to liue vpon the fruites of others mens labours, this man

*vyhat wil  
our here-  
tickes here  
say which  
neuer de-  
part from  
the com-  
pany of  
wome none  
of the holy  
fathers  
euer be-  
haued  
them se-  
lues in  
such sort.  
This ma-  
keth aga-  
inst our  
new Euā-  
gelists who  
will suffer  
no tribu-  
lations or  
labours to  
obtain the  
King-  
dome of  
heauen  
but only  
presuming  
of their  
vain faith*



led their  
life in  
pleasure  
and idle-  
nesse.

he called brother flie, for that such an one doing no good him selfe, but impairing the good labours of other men, maketh himselfe vile and abhorminable, to all sortes of people. Wherefore he vsed sometimes this manner of saying: I will that my bretheren occupie themselues, in labour and exercise: least that being inclined to idlenes, either theire harte or tongue, doe wander after vnlawful thinges. For his will and care was to haue silence by his bretheren observed, according to the prescript & rule of the Gospel: which admonisheth men at al tims with all dilligence to abstaine from al maner of idle words, as being to render an accompte thereof at the day of iudgemente. Wherefore if he did finde any of his bretheren, to be accustomed vnto idle and vaine wordes, he did there vpon, very sharply reprehend him, affirming that modest taciturnitie, was both a secure preservation of a pure hart, & likewise a vertue of no smalle accompt: considering that *Death & life, are said to be in the hāds of the tongue,* not so much in regard of the taste, as of the speech.

But although he endeavored alwaies to induce his bretheren vnto austeritie of life: yet he approved not that strickt kinde of severitie, which proceeded not from the bowels of devotion, neither yet was seasoned with the wholesome salte of discretion. For, when as one of his brethren, was vpon a night; through too much extremity of abstinence, greatly vexed with famine, & could not in that respect, take any naturall rest: the good and carrefull Pastor preceiuing that one of his



his sheep was then in present danger of perishing, called the brother forth with vnto him, and set, him bread before him, and to the ende all bashfullnes, might be away removed: he first began to eate therof himselfe, and so with sweetnesse invited him, to do the like. Whereby the brother being well encouraged, reiected shame and willingly tooke his meate: very much reioicing, that by the wise and provident condescending of the prudent Pastor he had happily escaped the hazard of his body, and had also received, no small example of edification, when the morning was come, the man of God calling his brethren altogether, after relation made vnto them of what had chanced in the night, adioyned also this heedful admonition vnto them. Let charity, saith he, & not meat, my brethren, be a patterne and example vnto you. Furthermore he taught them to follow discretion as the Chariot man of al vertues, howbeit not that discretion, which the flesh doth advise, but that very same, which Christ hath taught: whose most holy life, is vndeubredly known to be the most exact paterne of all perfection.

And for so much as it is not possible, for a man invironed with the infirmity of his fleshely body, so perfectly to followe, the vnspotted lambe of Christ crucified for vs vpon the Crosse, but that he shall daily gather some filthy Dreggs of sinne; vpon this cause, he avowed by vnfallible document, that they who do with vigilancy aspire to the perfection of life, ought daily to cleance themselves with streames of teares. For though him-



selfe had already attained vnto a wonderfull puri-  
ty both of heart and body: yet ceased he not with  
showers of teares, continually to cleance the  
eies of his minde, not much regarding the losse  
of his corporall eies. For having gotten through  
continuell weeping, almost daungerous imperfe-  
ction in his eies; & being for that cause by the  
Phisitian advised, in any wise to abstaine from  
teares, vnlesse he would vtterly loose his sight, the  
holy man made answere vnto him, Brother Phi-  
sitian, we must not in any sorte, for the love of  
that light, which is common aswell to flies, as to  
vs men; in any small degree, refuse the visitatiō  
of that light, which is of everlasting continew-  
ance: considering that it is not the spirit, which  
hath for vse of the flesh, receiued the benefit of  
light, but contrary wise, it is the flesh, which  
for the vse and service of the spirit hath receyued  
the same at the bountifull hand of God. And  
therefore he did rather chuse, to loose his corpo-  
rall eiesight: than by repressing the devotion of  
his spirit, to hinder those comfortable streames  
of teares, wherby the inwarde cie is cleared, that  
it may be able to see God.

But being ypon a time, councelled by the  
Phisitians, and therewithall, instantly perswa-  
ded by his brethren; to suffer himselfe to be cu-  
red by a certaine kinde of Cawtery: the mā of God  
humbly assented therevnto: the rather in that he  
perceyued, it would aswell be healthfull as other-  
wise painefull vnto him. The Surgion therefore,  
being sent for, came; and put his iron instrument

into



into the fire, to worke the cure. But the servant of Christ, chearing vp his body, which was now somewhat daunted with feare, beganne in this manner, as to a frind, to speake vnto the fire, saying, My brother fire, whom Almighty God hath created of a most exquisite seemelinese, full of force notably beautifull, and profitable, be favourable at this houre, be curteous now vnto me. I beseech the great & omnipotent Lord who hath created thee, so to temper the violence of thy burning heat, that burning with sweetenesse, I may be able to endure thee. This praier indeed, he made the signe of the Crosse right over against the red hotte iron instrument: and so remained afterwards without all kind of feare or quailing. Then was the sparckling iron entred vp to the top within the tender flesh: and the Cautery was drawn from the very eare, to the eie brow. In the doing whereof: what paine the holy man sustayned, he himselfe expressed vnto his brethren, saying, Giue praise vnto God my brethren: for I verely say vnto you; that I haue neither felt the heat of the fire, nor yet any payne in my flesh. And turning to the Phisician, he said vnto him, If the flesh be not already well concocted, put in your iron againe. The Phisician, then perceaving, in so weake and feeble flesh, so invincible a power of the spirit, admired with himselfe thereat: and extolled this diuine miracle, saying, I tell you plainly brethren: I haue seene wonderfull things to day. For the holy man was now come vnto that excellent degre of purity, that by a wonder-



*S. Francis  
making  
the signe  
of the  
Crosse tur-  
ned puer  
water into  
most exci-  
lent wine.*

full sweet consent & harmonie, his flesh did agree with his spirit, & his spirit did wholly conformance it self vnto God, it was by a diuine ordinance, brought to passe, that the creature obeying the Creator, was miraculously subiect to his will & comendement. As may also be scene by this other example of the same holy servant of God, who being sicke one time of a most dangerous disease, in the Desert of S. V R B A N E; & feeling then directly in himselfe the defect of nature: demaunded a cup of wine to be brought vnto him; wherupon answere being made that there was no wine, there to be had, he required them to bring him water; which being donne he blessed the same with the signe of the Crosse. Immediately thereupon, that which was before very naturall water, was now turned into most excellent wine, and that which the poverty of the place, could not afforde, the same did the purity of the holy men, deserue to obtaine. By the taste also whereof, he so speedily recovered himselfe againe, that both the newnesse of the taste, & the present reuewing of his impaired health: altering supernaturally, both the thing tasted, & him that was the taster thereof, did by a double testimony confirme the absolute dispoiling of the olde man, and the perfect putting on of the newe. And not only was this manner of obedience, by the creatures of God, to his holy servant, exhibited: but the providence also of the Creator, did every where condescend to satisfie his wil and desire. For his body being vpon a time ouer-dulled with the concurrence of many diseases together,

hee



he founde in himselfe a desire to heare some harmonickall kinde of sounde, that thereby he might be reviued and receiue more comforte of spirite: but it not besetming his life and profession to procure it by the ministerie of man, behold; the service of Angels, was ready to accomplish, the Holy mans desire. For as he was waking one night & meditating vpon God, sodainly there sounded a Harpe, of most wonderfull harmony, and of most sweet and pleasant melodie. At what time, he saw not any man: but might well perceiue the passage and returne of the Harper, by the alteration of the sounde of the musicke; as it was sometime nigher, and sometime further from him. Wherefore, directing his spirit vp to God, he was so singularly delighted in that most sweet sounding musicke, that he did almost thinke himselfe, to haue bin in another world. This also could not be hidden from his brethren: who did oftentimes by certaine and vnsalible tokens perceiue, that he was visited by Almighty God with so excessiue & frequent consolations, that it was not possible for him, in any sorte to conceale them.

An other time also, as the man of God went to preach, betweene *Lombardie* and the Marquisate of *Ter Visium*, being then accompaigned with one of his brethren, & trauailing along by the Riuer *Poe*, the darkenesse of the night sodainly came vpon them. By meane whereof, the way being subiect vnto many and sundry perillouse daungers, as wel in regarde of the Fennes thereabouts: as also of the River it selfe, the brother associate, spake vnto



the holy man . saying : make thy praiers , good Father , vnto God , that we may be delivered out of these imminent daungers . To whom the man of God answered with much hope and confidence , in this wise : God is able no doubt ( my brother & if it stand with the good pleasure of his sweet disposition , to disperse the deepe darkenesse of this obscure night , and to vouchsafe vnto vs the benefit of light . Which wordes he had no sooner vttered , but by the power of God , such an abundant light beganne to shine about them , that the night being darke to others , they nevertheless did see in cleare and perfect light , not only the way , but very many things on every side aboute them , being by the conduct thereof , both corporally directed , & spiritually comforted : whereby they came safe the last to the place of their lodging , by the passage of no small space of ground , which they ioyfully overpassed , with singing Himnes and praises , in honor of Almighty God . See now & consider , vnto how great vertue and wondrous purity this holy man had attained ; at whose beck , the fire did temper his heat , the water did change her tast , the melodie of Angels did recreate his spirits , & whome the light of heaven , did guide & conduct in his way : that so it may fully appeare : that vnto the sanctified senses of Gods holy servant , the whole frame of the world , did readilie yeild , an obsequious kinde of obeisance .

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.  
*Of his humility and obedience ; and of Gods fauourable  
 condescending . vnto all his desires .*



**T**HE guardian and ornament of all vertues, humility, had in so aboundant manner replenished, this holy servant of God, that in his own reputation he was nothing els but a wretched sinner: whereas in very deed he was a perfect mirror, and a most gloriouse resemblance of all manner of holynesse. Vpon this grounde worke, he determined to build vp himselfe, having as a wise Architecke laid that very same foundation, which he had learnd of our Sauour Christ. For this cause he saied that the sonne of God, did come downe from the highnes of his Fathers Bosome to these our contemptible things, that being our Lord & Maister, he might aswell by his owne example, as by his worde: teach this excellent vertue of humility vnto vs. And therefore, as the true disciple of Christe, his praier was to seeme vile and base, both in his owne and other mens eies: remēbring the same which is said, by the most superexcellent Maister, *That which is high amonge men is abomination with God.* Therunto also adding this saying of his owne, that: *Looke how much a man is the sight of God, so much he is, and no more.* And therefore he held it for a very vaine and foolish thing, to be extolled with the favours of the world: reioycing much to be reproached, and sorrowing no lesse to be commended. For he had faire rather heare himselfe reuiled and reproched, than praised: or commended, knowing that the one might provoke him to amende, and the other might giue occasion to fall. And for that cause, oftentimes, when the people extolled in him, the meritt of holynesse he commanded.



maunded one of his brethren, to vrter some words of debasement and reviling against him, in his owne hearing. Which when the brother did, although much against his will, calling him a rusticall and rude body, an vnskilfull and vnprofitable hireling: he was marveilously exhilarated therat, as well in minde, as in countenance: whereby he answered; Our Loid blesse thee, my most dere sonne; for thou speakest the very truth, and such wordes, as it best beleeueth *Peter Bernardus* sonne, to heare.

But to the end he might make himselfe abiect and contemptible vnto others, he spared not his owne disgrace, but in his publique praaching before all the people he would open and manifest his owne defects. As having once vpon occasion of a right grievouse sicknesse, remitted in some sorte, the rigour of his vsuall abstinence, for the better recoverie of his health againe, after such time as he had somewhat better resumed his strength vnto him: the true dispiser of himselfe, animating himselfe to the reproache of his owne flesh; It is not meete, said hee that I shoulde be held for a man of abstinence, meane while that I secretly giue me selfe, to the pampering of my flesh. Wherefore he raised vp himselfe, as being wholly inflamed with the spirit of holy humility & assembling the people togerher, in a streete of the Ciity of *Assisum*, himselfe with many of his brethren, which he had brought with him, entred solemnely into the greater Church where having a roape fastened about his neck, he caused himself



to be drawen all naked saving only of his breeches in the open sight, and veiwe of them all, even to that very stone whervpon malefactors at the time of their punnishment, were wonte to be placed. Vpon the which, he then getting vp as he coulde albeit that, he were both weake and affected with a quartane Ague; yet in such extreame cold as the time did then afforde, did preach with great efficacie and force of minde. At which time he affirmed in the hearing of them all, that he was in no wise to be honored as a spirituall man, but rather to be contemned of all men as a fleshly and gluttonouse personne. Wherevpon the people there assembled, wondring at so strainge a spectacle: and being also compucted with devotion: because they well knew the strictnesse of his austerity, did openly protest, that such manner of humility, was rather to be admired, than in any sorte to be imitated. And though this action might rather seeme to be a wonder in nature, according to the saying of the Prophet, then otherwise a matter of example, yet was it vndoubtedly, a true patterne of perfect humility, whereby the scholler of Christ, is instructed to contemne the glory of transitorie praise, to repress the swelling pride of arrogancie, and to reprove the falshood of craftie dissimulation, Oftentimes he did many things after this manner: that externally he might appeare as a lost vessel: and internally might possesse the spirit of sanctification.

He studded also to hide the guifte of his Lord and Creatour in the secret inclosure of his bress



Eccl. 11. 13.

thinking it not convenient to lay open to vaine glory, that which might be vnto himselfe, an occasion of ruine. For oftentimes being commended of the multitudes, for a blessed and holy man he vsed to applie this manner of speache vnto the losse; I may yet haue both sonnes and daughters doe not therefore praise, such an one as is not already secure. *No man is to be praised; whose ende is vncertaine.* And these were his wordes to them that praised him. But to himselfe he spake in this sorte; Oh FRANCIS, if God Almighty had bestowed so greate benefits, euen vpon a Thiefe, as he hath vouchsafed vnto thee; he would be no doubt more thankfull than thy selfe, vnto him, To his brethren also he saied oftentimes; that no man ought with an vndue applause to flatter himselfe vpon occasion of any kinde of thinge, which is in a sinners power to doe. For saith he a sinner may fast, a sinner may pray, a sinner may mourne, and lament, a sinner may also macerate his owne flesh: but this only a sinner cannot do, namely to be faithfull, to his Lord and Maister. In this therefore we may haue iust cause to glory, if to our Lord we render, the glory which is of righte his owne: if serving him faithfully, whatsoever it is that he do giue vnto vs; the same do we faithfully resctibe vnto him againe.

But this Evangelicall Marchāt, to the end he might by more occasiōs increase his gaine, & might turn all the present time, to his further merit: tooke not much delight to hold the place of a Governour, as of a subiect: neither yet desired so much to com-

man-



mand, as to obey. And therefore resigning his office of General, he desired a gardiā, to whose wil & commandement he mighte in all manner of pointes, accomodate himselfe. For he affirmed, that the fruite of holy obedience, was of so great plenty and abundance, that vnto them who submitted their neckes to her yoke, no time overpassed, with out some gainfull commoditie. Wherefore his custome was, vnto such brothers, as he vsually went with all, evermore to promise obedience, and faithfully to obserue the same. And therupo n this he spake sommetime of himselfe vnto his companions. Among other things which the goodnesse of God hath of his greate bountie vouchsafed to graunte vnto me, this grace he hath freely bestowed vpon me, that I could as diligently yeld mine obedience vnto a Novice of one howres standing, if he were appointed to be my Gnardian; as to one of the most auncient, and discreetest brerhren. For the subiect (saith he) must not consider his Superiour as a man, but as him for whose lone he is become subiect vnto him. And by how much the more contemptible he is that doth commaund by so much the more acceptable, is the humilitie of him, that doth exercise obedience.

He being one tie demāded who was to be iudged truly obedient proposed the similitude of a deade body for an example. Take me vp (saith he) a dead body, & put it where you please: you shal neither see it strine, when it is moued; nor murmur, when it is placed, nor yet repine, when it is displaced. But if you set it in a chaire, it looketh not vp

*Behold  
the great  
obedience  
and humi-  
lity in the  
holy Fa-  
ther,*



aloſte, but downe righte to the ground: if you apparel it in purple robes it diſcovereth the pale-  
neſſe of his countenance, two for one, more-  
than it did before. Euen very this (ſaieth he) is a  
true patterne of obedience, who doth not diſcern  
why hee is mooued, who careth not where he is  
placed, who deſireth not to be changed, who  
being aduanced to office, retaineth his former  
humilitie: and who the more he is honored, doth  
ſo much the more repute himſelfe vnworthy. And  
for mine owne parte (quoth he one time)  
vnto his companions, I cannot thinke my  
ſelfe worthy the name of a Friar Minor, vnleſſe  
that I be in this very ſtate, which I ſhal now de-  
ſcribe vnto you. See now, I goe as Prelate and  
Cheife of my brethren, conducting them all vnto  
the Chapter: there I preache among them, there  
I vſe mine admonitions vnto them, and in fine it  
is ſpoken with diſgrace vnto me. Thou euil be-  
fitteſt to rule among vs, for that thou art a man  
vnlearned harſhe in thy ſpeaking, an Idiot, and  
a ſimple perſon. At length, I am caſt out with  
reproache, as a man contemptible and baſely eſte-  
med at euery hande. I ſpeake it vnto you truly, my  
brother, that vnleſſe I ſhal with the ſame cheare-  
fulneſſe of countenance, with the ſame inward a-  
lacritie of minde, and with the ſame inuiolable  
purpose of holinneſſe, attend vnto the hearing of  
theſe wordes: a Friar minor I cannot be. And this  
admonitiom alſo he wel adioined: *In preeminence  
there is a ruine, in praiſe a downfal; but in the humilitie  
of the ſubiect, is the gaine of the ſoule.* Why therefore  
do wee



doe we follow dangers more than gaine, leing  
that wee haue received time, to make our com-  
modity.

And for this very cause, this perfect patterne of  
humility Saint *Francis* : would haue his brethren  
to be called Minors, and the Prelates of his Order,  
to be tearmed Ministers, as well thereby to vse  
the wordes of the Gospell, which he had promi-  
sed to obserue, as also that his disciples, mighte  
by their very name be continually put in minde,  
that they were come to learne humility, at the  
Schooles of their humble Maister, Christe. For  
Iesus Christ that excellent Maister, and most ex-  
quisite teacher, of this notable vertue humi-  
lity, to the ende he might perfectly informe his Dis-  
ciples therein, said vnto them : *who soeuer will be the  
greater among you, let him be your Minister : and he that  
will be first among you, shall be your servant.* And con-  
formably herevnto, it being demaunded of him  
by the Bishop of *Hosia*, then Cardinal Protector,  
and chiefe advancer of the Order of the Friars  
Minors, who after ward according to the fore-  
prophecying of the holy man, being exalted to the  
honor of Papall Dignity ; was called *Gregory* the  
Ninth, whether it stood with his liking, to haue  
his brethren promoted vnto Ecclesiasticall Digni-  
ties : he made answere vnto him : My Lord, for  
this cause are my brethren called Minors, which  
is as much to say, as lesser or inferiour persons, that  
they may not presume to be made greater. If you  
will haue the to bring forth fruit in the Church  
of God : then hold and conserue them, in the state

*Math.*  
20. 26.



of their owne vocation: & permitte the not by any meanes to ascend vnto Ecclesiasticall governments.

And for so much as he preferred humilitie, as well in himselfe, as in them that were vnder him, before all other honours besides; God therefore the lover of humble persons, adiudged him to be worthy in that respect of farre greater and more high dignities: accordingly as it was by a vision from heaven revealed vnto one of the brethren, of speciall vertue and devotion. For being in the company of the man of God, & togeather with him praying in a certaint solitary & abandoned Church, with a great & fervent affectio, he fell into a trance, and saw among many seates in heaven, one of more excellent dignity than all the rest besides: the same being adorned with precious stones, and shining also with all manner of glory. And wondering then within himselfe, at the brightnesse of that highe and eminent Throne, he beganne very carefully in his thoughts to enquire, who should be so happy, as to be assumed therevnto. At which very time he hearde a voice which saied vnto him; This was the seate of one of them that fell, and now it is kept for humble *Francis*; And afterwards, the brother returning vnto himselfe againe, followed the blessed man out of the Church according to his wonted manner. At what time, talking, by the way as they went, of Almighty God: the brother, not vnmindefull of the vision shewen vnto him, very prudently demaunded of him, what conceite and opinion he held of himself. To whom the humble servant of Christ made

answere



answere: Verily I doe esteeme my selfe the greatest sinner of the world. Wherevnto the brother replying that he could not with the safety of his conscience either say or thinke in such wise of himself, he presently therevnto againe reioined, saying: O my brother, if Christe had shewed so greate mercy vnto the most wicked man aliue, as he hath donne to me I do verely beleue that he would haue binne more thankefull vnto Almighty God than, I haue bin. Vpon the hearing of the which so admirable humility: the brother was absolutely confirmed, concerning the truth of the vision disclosed vnto him: acknowledging by reification of the holy Gospel it self, that vnto the excellency of glory, from the which the proude is cast downe: he that is truly humble is exalted.

Another time also as he was praiyng in a certaine solitary Church within the Province of *Masbia*, at the hill *Casalis*; he vnderstood by revelation of the spirit, that there were certain holy Reliques remaining there in that place: which he the with griefe of minde perceaving, to haue binne for long together defrauded, of the honor due vnto them; commanded his brethren to translate them in all reverent manner, vnto a more convenient and seemely place of abiding. But himselfe being vppon iust occasion for a time departed from them, the children then vnmindfull of the commandement of their father, neglected the merite of holy obedience. Notwithstanding vpon a certaine day, when as they intended to celebrate the holy Mi-



*Thou  
which dost  
contemne  
the relicke  
of saintes,  
beholde  
what re-  
verence the  
man of  
God gaue  
vnto them*

steries, having removed the vpper covering of the Aulrat, they founde there not without great admiration, sundrie most faire and fragrant bones, discerning them to be the same holy Reliques, which no hand of man but the power of God had brought to the place. And it was no long while after, that the holy man of God returning back againe: beganne diligently to enquire whither that which himselfe had commaunded concerning the Reliques, had binne by them accomplished. But the brethren humbly cōfessing their fault, in neglecting their due obedience, deserved to obtaine pardon, together with some punishment also therewithall. And then the holy man burst forth into these wordes, Blessed, saith he, be my Lord my God, who hath by himselfe fulfilled that which your parte and dutie ought to haue performed. Consider now diligently the care of Gods diuine providence, concerning this dust of ours: & ponder also maturely in minde the excellent favour which humble Saint Francis enioied in the eyes of God. For man refusing to obay his commaundements, Almighty God vouchsafed, to grant his desires.

Vpon a certaine time also comming to the City of IMOLA, he went forth with to the Bishop and humbly then besought him that he might with his good favour, assemble the people vnto a Sermon. Whervpon the Bishop somewhat roughly replying, saied, It sufficeth Brother that to the people vnder my charge, I myselfe do preache. Immediately the paterne of true humility, bowing  
downe



downe his heade with humble reverence, departed out of the place: how be it that within lesse than an howre he returned thervnto againe. Whereupon the Bishop seeming to be much offended, demanded of him what he sought for at his handes, now the second time: vnto whome with no lesse inward humility of harte, than outward submission of words, thus the holy man replied: my Lord, if the Father, repell his sonne at one doore, he must enter in againe at another. By force of which humility, the Bishop being wholly subdued, embraced him with a loving and chearefull countenance: saying then vnto him: From hence forth both you and your brethren may freely preach in in my Diocese, by my licence generall, for so much your holy humility, hath very well deserved.

It happened that once he came to *Aretium* at such time as the whole Cittie was so miserably afflicted with civill warre and dissention, that it seemed to be thereby in present danger of utter destruction. And he being then lodged in the suburbs sawe a route of Divells alofte in the aire right over the Cittie insulting, and also inflaming the perturbed mindes of the Cittizens, to mutuall armes and slaughter. But to the ende he might drive away those seditious powers of the aire, he sent brother *Silvester*, a man of singular simplicity, and sincerity, assigning vnto him the Office of a Crier, saying: Go before the gate of the Cittie, and on the parte of Almighty God commande the Divells by vertue of obedience, that they speedily departe

*Beholde  
that none  
can preach  
the worde  
of god  
without  
leave of his  
superiour.*



Incontinently the childe of true obedience made hast to performe the Fathers commaundement: & having first given praise vnto Almighty God, he beganne with loude voice to crie before the gate of the Citty, on the parte of God Almighty, and by the commaundement of his servant *Francis*, depart ye farre, away from hence all ye wicked Diuells. And presently vpon these wordes, the Citty returned vnto peace againe: and all the Cittizens with great good agreement, renewed the lawes of their former civility. For the raging pride of the Diuells, which had as it were besieged that Citty, being once repelled, the wisdom of the poore, that is to say, the humility of Saint *Francis*, coming then vppon them, restored peace vnto the people, and preserved the Citty from desolation. For by the merite of that rare and excellent vertue of humble obedience, he had obtained so powerfull a commaundement ouer those prowde & rebellious spirits, that the did both repress their insolent arrogancy, and did also repell their importunate violence. In this manner the prowde Diuells do ever flie away, from the eminent vertues of the humble: saving that sometimes the mercie of God permitteth them to be buffered of the enemy, for the better preservation of their humility, according as Saint *Paul* the Apostle writeth of himselfe, and as Saint *Francis* proved by experience. For being requested by Lord *Leo*, Cardinal of the Holy Crosse to remaine some litle while with him in the Citty, he humbly consented ther-vnto, for the reverence and loue he bare vnto him.

But in

2. Cor.  
12. 7.



But in the very first night of his entertainment his prayers being ended, and he preparing himself to sleep, a sorte of Divells issued in vpon him, furiously assailing the souldier of Christe. Whome when they had long and sorely beaten, at length they left him for dead. But as soone as the fiends were gone the servant of God calling his companion, related vnto him the whole matter as it had befallen him: sayng, I do verely belieue Brother that the Divells, who can doe nothing, but as the providence of God doth dispose, haue for this cause rushed now with so great fury vpon me, because ther is no good hope to be conceiued of my aboade in the Court of Princes. For my brethren that abide in poore and forlorne places, hearing that I am now in company with *Cardinals*, will peradventure imagine, that I am busied in worldly affaires, that I am advanced with honors, and that I do abound with pleasures. Wherefore I thinke it better, that he who is given as an example vnto others, should avoide the Court, and converse humbly among the humble in humble places: to the ende that vnto them who sustaine povertie, himselfe may giue encouragement, by sustaining the like with them. In the morning therefore they came, and humbly excusing themselves, tooke their leaue of the *Cardinall*.

For the holy man abhorred pride, as the roote and offspring of all other evils besides, no lesse detesting the foule vice of disobedience, which he esteemed as her most pestilent & deformed daughter: but the humili ty of pennance, he did as e-

Aug. 18.  
de cm.  
Dei c. 18.



equally approue. It fortun'd once, a certaine brother to be brought before him, who having committed some offence against the law of obedience, was therefore rightfully to be corrected, by the discipline of iustice. But the man of God, by evident tokens perceyving, that the brother was vnfeignedly penitent, for his fault of transgression: was by the loue he bare to humility, much inclined to pardon him yet least that his facility in pardoning, might be vnto others an occasion, in like manner to offend, he commaunded the brothers Capouche to be taken from him, and cast into the midst of the flaming fire, to the end that all men might obserue with how great and with what manner of revenge, the offence of disobedience ought of right to be chastised and corrected. But when the Capouche had bin a good while in the fire, he commaunded the same to be taken out of the fire againe, and to be delivered vnto the brother, vpon his humble repentance. A wonderfull matter it is to repute. The Capouche being raked out from the midst of the flames, bare no marke or signe of burning at all: and so it came to passe, that God, by this one miracle, did both approue the vertue of the holy man, and did also commend the humiliry of penance. Worthely therefore is the humiliry of Saint FRANCIS to be imitated and embraced, which obtained even in earth so admirable a dignity, as to incline the wil of God to his desire, to change the affection of man: to foile by his commaundement, the insolent pride of the Diuells, and with a beck to repress, the deuou.



devouring flames of the fire. This is in very dede that high and excellent vertue, which exalting them that possesse it: while it giveth reverence vnto all, deserueth worthily, to be honored of all.

THE SEAVENTH CHAPTER.

*Of his loue of poverty, and of the marueilous supply  
of his wants.*

**A**MONG the many and fundry gifts of spirituall graces, which holy Saint FRANCIS obtained of the bountifull giuer of all things: he merited by a certain speciall prerogative to abound in the riches of simplicity, by the loue of most perfect poverty. This vertue, the holy man considering to haue binne familiar vnto the sonne of God, & waighing also the same to be now a daies as it were abandoned throughout the world: did so efficaciouly endeavour to espouse the same vnto himselfe by perpetuall Charity, that for the loue thereof he did not only forsake both Father and Mother, but also did freely distribute and disburden himself, of what ever he either had, or might in time to come be able to haue. Never was there man so desirous of gold, as he was of poverty: nor yet more carefull to keepe his treasure than he to preserve this Evangelicall Pearle. And herein especially was his sight offended, if any thing he might obserue in the brethren, which did not tend vnto poverty, in every point agreable. And he verely himselfe, with a Coate, a Corde, and a certaine

Matth.  
13. 45.



See what a  
fauor  
and dili-  
gent lo-  
uer  
S. Francis  
was of  
Enangeli-  
call po-  
uer-  
tie.

Psal.  
70. 16.

light paire of breeches, esteeming himself to be abundantly riche: rested therewithall, from his first entrance into religion, vntill his very death fully satisfied and contented. He vsed oftentimes with teares to call to minde, the povertie of Christ Iesus and of his Mother: affirming that therefore this was the Queene of vertues, for that it so singularly excelled, in the Kinge of Kings, and in the Queene his Mother. For being demanded of his brethren in the Chapter house, by what vertue a man might be made most gratefull and acceptable vnto Christ; opening as it were the secrette of his harte, he made answer vnto them *Knowe ye my brethren, that pouertie is the speciall way of saluation, as being the nutriment of humility: and the roote of perfection; whose fruit is manifold but secrette and vnknown. For this is that bidden treasure of the feilde, which the Gospell commendeth vnto vs: for the buieng whereof, all things are to be solde and the things which cannot be solde, are to be despised in comparison of it. That man (saith he, who desireth to attaine vnto the perfectiō of this vertue, ought not only to renounce all worldly wisdom, but in some sorte also the knowledge of secular learning, that beeing disinherited of such a possession, he may enter into the powers of our Lord, and may offer himselfe, naked into the armes of Christ Iesus, crucified. For he can in no wise be accounted perfectly to renounce the worlde, who reserveth within the secrette inclosure of his harte, the coffers of his owne proper sence and vnderstanding.*

And

And



And oftentimes preaching vnto his brethren of this vertue of povertie, he vsually brought to their mindes this place of the Gospell, that *The Foxes haue holes, and the foules of the aire haue nests: but the sonne of man hath not where to lay his head*. For which cause, he taught his brethren, that according vnto the manner of poore men, they should build vnto themselves poore and simple cottages: which nevertheless they should not inhabite as their owne, but like as forrainers & pilgrimes do abide in the harbours of other men. For these he saied are the lawes of pilgrimes: to refresh themselves vnder another mans roose, to thirst after their Conntrey, and to passe along in peace. He commanded sometimes, that the houses which were alreadie builded, should be beaten downe, or els that the brethren should be removed from them: if at any time he perceaved ought to be in them, which by reason either of propriety, or otherwise of costlinesse were contrarie to the pouerty, by the Gospell advised. *This he said to be the foundation of his Order: which being laied and grounded first of all, the whole building of Religion doth so rest and rely vppon it, that by the perpetuity thereof, it is confirmed and by the overthrowing thereof, it also, is vtterly overthrowen and ruined.*

And therefore as himselfe had learnt by revelation, so did he teache and instruct his followers that the entraunce into holy Religion was to be begun from those words of the Gospell, *If thou wilt be perfect, go, and sel all that thou hast, and geue vnto the poore.* Wherefore he admitted none into his Order

Mat.

8. 20.



Gen.  
12. 10

but such as were dispossessed of all things, and retained nothing of their owne; as well in regard of the word of the holy gospel, as also that the wealth reserved, might be free from occasion of scandale. Whervpon it came to passe, that in the Marquisate of Ancona, the true Patriarck of the poore made answer vnto a certaine man that demanded to be received into the order: if thou desirest to be ioyned to the poore ones of Christ, distribute thy goods to the poore. Which when the man had heard, he yet went forward, & by the sinister intisement of carnall loue, relinquished his wealth to his kinsfolks reseruing for the poore no whit at all. But when the holy man, had by his owne relation, vnderstoode thereof, after a very hard and sharpe reproofe, he said ynto him, Goe thy waies, brother sic, for that thou hast not as yet departed out of thy house and kindred: but hast given thy goods to thine owne bloud and allies, having defrauded the poore, wherefore thou art vnworthy to be a sociate vnto the holy poore seruantes of Christ. Thou hast begunne from the flesh, whereby thou hast laid a ruinouse foundation, for a spirituall building. Then returned the sensuall man to his frendes, demanding of them his goodes againe: which having refused to giue to the poore, did him selfe the sooner forsake, his vertuouse purpose.

At an other time also he being in the place of *sancta Maria de Portiuncula*, was then in so great distresse of poverty, that there seemed to be no meane of providing, for the exigent necessitie of the number of the bretheren, that thither frequently



quently resorted from forraine places: wherevpon the Vicar repaying vnto the man of God, and alledging vnto him the penurie of the bretheren, craved of him also therewithall that it might be lawfull to reserue some parte of the goodes of the Novices that entred into religion, for supplying the vrgent wantes of the bretheren as necessity should require. To whom the holy man not being ignorant of Gods heauenly purpose; answered, God forbid, my most deare brother, that for any mans sake we should impiously offend against the Rule. I had rather thou shouldest vncover the *Altar* of the gloriouse Virgin when necessitie doth require, then to attempt any thing in never so smale a degree against the vowe of poverty, or contrarie to the observance of the holy Gospel of Christ. For the Blessed Virgin will more gratefully accept, to haue her Altar vncovered, so long as the counsell of the Gospell shal be observed: then to haue the same adorned, and the counsell of Christ neglected, when it is vndertaken and promised vnto him.

But it fortun'd one time that the man of God passing with his companion, through *Apulia*, nigh vnto *Barrum*: did finde in the way a great purse stuffed as it was to be thought with mony. This bagge the poor servant of Christ, was by his companion admonished, and instantly also required to take vp from the ground, and to bestowe the mony vpon the poore. Which he the holy man of God refused to doe: affirming that there woulde appeare some stratageme of the diuel in this newe

founde



founde purse and adding also Moreo ver, that the brother did not perswade him to a matter of meritte, but of sinne, in counselling him to take away & dispose, the right and interest of an other man. So they departed from the place, and hastened onward to proceed in their iourney. But the brother could not yet be quiet, suffering him selfe to be deluded by a vayne Pretext of piety, whereby he molested the man of God, as though he had no care of the necessary releuiing of the wants of the poore. At the length therefore the humble man assented, to returne to the place: howbeit not to satisfie the wil of the brother, but the rather to discouer the fraude & deceite of the diuell. Wherefore he returned to the purse together with the brother & another yong man that was in the way. And after praier devoutly made, he commaunded the brother to take it vp. Who being then amazed and trembling also for feare, did at length beginne to discerne that diuelli sh monster: yet nevertheless in regard of the commaundement of holy obedience, driving away all doubtfullnesse of minde, he stretched out his hand to the purse. And behold a great Serpent issuing out of the purse, and together therewithall instantly vanishing away, manifestly detected vnto the brother the diuells fraude and deceipt. The holy man therefore, having thus discovered the Crafte of the subtile enemy, gaue therevpon this caution to his companion, saying: Mony. O my brother, is vnto the servants of God, none other thing than the diuell, or an adder full of poison.

After



After this there happened vnto the holy man a wonderfull matter, as he went a long in his way vpon vrgent occasion, towards the citty of *Sienna*. For it so fell out, that in a certaine great and large plaine betweene *Campitulum* and *S. Quiricus*; there mett him three poore women altogether alike, in stature age, and countenannce; presenting vnto him a new, & vnsuall manner of salutation: saying, *Well meette Lady Pouertie*. Vpon the hearing wherof, he being indeede a most absolute louer of povertie was there withall replenished with a singular and vnspeakeable consolation, as hauing nothing in himselfe whereby he would so willingly have binne saluted, as by that name of pouertie, which they voluntarily & freely applied vnto him. But they also sodeinly disappearing out of sight, and the brethren in company with the holy man there vpon considering, aswell their wonderful likenesse & resemblance, the strangeness of their salutation and meeting, as lastly of their vanishing & disappearing: did by good reason iudge & discern, that some mysticall thing was thereby designed concerning the holy man. And verely it seemed indeed, that by those three poore women, appearing vnto him so like in countenance, saluting him so strangely, and vanishing away so sodeinly, it was conveniently enough declared, that the eminent beauty of Euangelicall perfection, did in an equall degree, in that holy man of God shine & cast forth her gloriouse beames, whether in respect of chastity, or of obedience, or els of poverty: though he rather chose to glory in the priuiledge of Po-



uerty; which sometime he was wonte to call his mother, sometime his spouse, and sometime his lady and mistresse. In this vertue he desired to exceede all others, for so much as by the same he had learned, to repute himselfe interiour to all men. And therefore if at any time he saw any man to be poorer than himselfe he presently rebuking himselfe was incited thereby vnto the like striving as it were by emulation of poverty, and fearing to be by any overcome therein. For it happened that meeting a poore man in the way, and beholding his nakednesse to be very great he conceaved much compassion thereof in his hart and with lamentable voice vnto his companion said: The poverty of this man, my brother, hath giuen great cause of shame vnto vs; considering that we haue for great riches made choice of poverty, and behold it appeareth now more in him.

This devout seruant of Almighty God, for the loue with he bare vnto holy poverty, did much more willingly make vse of the Almes which he begged from doore to doore, than of those which were offered freely vnto him. For if he were at any time invited by great persones, at whose tables he were to be honored with more abundant fare, he was ever accustomed before hand to begge some fragments of bread at the next neighbours houses, & so being first enriched with povertie, he afterwards sate downe at the table. And having done the like one day when he was invited by the Bishop of *Hosia*, who bare an especiall loue and affection vnto the poore seruant of Christ; the By-



shop then complaining that he did derogate much from his honor, who being to eate in his house, would before hand go begge for Almes; the servant of God made answere: saying. My Lord, I haue exhibited great honor vnto you, meanewhile that I haue honored a Lord far greater than you: for our Lord God is well pleased in poverty, and in that especially which is voluntary begging for Christ. This regall dignity, which our Lord Iesus being made poore, hath voutsafed for vs to asume to the inter that by his poverty he might enrich vs and might make vs being poore in spirite to be Kings and Coheires of his heavenly Kingdome: this, I say I will in no wise relinquish for any fee of deceitfull riches, which are graunted vnto vs but for an houers continuance.

Sometimes exhorting his brethren to goe beg for Almes, he vsed these wordes vnto them, Goe your waies now, saith he, for so much as in this last howre, the Friers Minors are lent vnto the worlde, to the ende that in them, the elect may fulfill that worke of piety, for the which they may be by the iudge commended: at what time as they shall heare that most sweete and comfortable saieing, *As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.* And therefore he said it was a delightfull thing to begge vnder the title of the Friers Minors, whom the Maister of Evangelicall truth, hath with his owne mouth in the reward of the iust, so directly signified. Vppon principall feasts also, when opportunity would serue, he vsed to begge: saying that in the holy poore, that

Math.  
25. 40.



Psalm.

72. 25.

Luc.

24. 1.

word of the Prophet was accomplished *Man hath eaten the bread of Angels*. For that bread he said vndoubtedly to be the bread of Angels, which being asked for the loue of God, and being by the holy suggestion of the blessed Angels, for charitie towards him bestowed, is so by holy poverie gathered and collected from doore to doore. Whervpō it be falling him to abide vpon an Easter day in a certaine Hermitage which was so farre from the company of men, that conveniently he could not begge: he then calling himself to minde of him who appeared the same day in the forme of a stranger vnto his Disciples as they went vnto *Emmaus*, demaunded Almes therefore of his brethren, as a poore man; and a stranger. Which when he had with humility receaved, he then instructed them with holy speeches: that passing through the desert of this world, they should like forraniers and strangers, as true Hebrewes in povertie of spirit continually celebrate the Passeover of our Lorde: vnderstanding therby his passage out of this world vnto his Father,

And for because in the asking of Almes, he was not ledde with desire of gaine, but with the liberty and freedome of spirit; God therefore, the Father of the poore, seemed ouer him to beare a speciall care and protection. For it happened that the servant of God being surprised with sicknesse in a certaine place called *Noceria*, he was from thence conuaied towards *Afisiu*, by certaine solemne Messengers which the people of that City, had out of their great devotion, sent for that purpose



purpose vnto him. Who bringing with them the servant of Christ, came to a certaine poore village called *Saribanum*, where as well the time of the day, as hungar also, requiring meate they went out to provide, but finding no meate to be bought for money, they returned emptie to the place againe. To whom the holy man said: for this cause ye haue founde nothing, because you trust more in your Flies: than you doe in our Lord. For he called their pieces of mony, by the name of Flies. But returne (said he) to the houses, wherby you passed before, and humbly desire the Almes of the inhabitants, offering the loue of God for a reward vnto them. Neither do ye out of a false estimation hereof conceiue, as of a thing either of bashfullnesse, or basenes for you to vndertake: considering that the great Almes giver hath now after sinne, by his abundant goodnesse, graunted & disposed of all things in Almes, both to the worthy & vnworthy. Wherevpon his conductours being warfaring men, setting shame aside, and craving Almes with a willing minde, made better market for the loue of God, than for their mony. For by the diuine instinct of God, the poore inhabitants were so compunct in heart, that they freely offered not only their goodes, but themselves also therewithall. And so it came to passe, that the same degree of wat which mony could not relieue, euen that did the riche poverty of Saint FRANCIS abundantly supply.

At such time as the holy man lay sick in an Ermitage nigh to *Reate*, a certaine Phisitian resorted



oftentimes with timely endeavour ynto him. But the servant of Christ not being able to giue a reward vnto him answerable to his paines and labours: the most liberall God, who would not dismisle him without a present requitall, recompensed his godly industrie in his poore servants behalfe, with this newe and vnusuall benefite. For this Phisition having about that very time newly built him a house wherevpon he had bestowed, the whole summe of all his former gaines, and labours, the same by meane of a wide rift in the wall, reaching from the toppe to the bottome of the foundation, was ready to fall to the ground. in so much as it seemed impossible by any art or humane industrie to be prevented. But he having great confidence in the meritts of the holy man, did with great zeale of faith request the brethten, that some thing might be given vnto him, which the man of God had toucht with his handes. Having therefore at length with great instancy of intreatie obtained, some litle parcell of his haire, he put the same over night within the rift of the wall, which he rising betimes in the morning, founde to be shut and conioined againe with so strong & firme a solidity, that neither could he pul out the Reliques which he had inclosed therein, nor yet could he finde any marke of the former division. Whereby it was through the goodnesse of God provided that he who diligently ministred vnto the decaied body of the holy servant of God did prevent the danger of his own dwelling house which was ready to fall to the ground.



Another time also the man of God desiring to go vnto a certaine desert, where he might more freely attend vnto contemplation: for so much as he was weake and feeble he was carried vppon a certaine poore mans Ass. And when as the same poore man by reason of following the servant of Christ, and passing with him over the mountaine places, in the extreamest heats of the yeare, was then so wearied with the painfullnes and length of his iourney, that he seemed to faine through the excesliue heat of his thirst, he instantly beganne to crie after the holy man; Beholde I die for thirst, vnlesse I may be presently refreshed by the benefit of some draught of drinke. Wherevppon the man of God, incontinently alighting downe from the Ass, fixed his knees vppon the ground, and stretchinge forth his armes to heauen, ceased not to pray vntill he perceived himself to be heard. But his praier being ended at length, make haste (saith he) vnto the man, and goe to yonder rocke, for there thou shalt finde a spring of linely water, which Christ hath mercifully provided out of the stone, for thee to drinke. Wonderfull without doubt is the favourable goodness of Almighty God, which doeth so easely incline it selfe vnto his servants desires. The Thirstie man drank from out of the rock, of that comfortable and refreshing water, which was by the efficacie of praier produced, and filled his cuppe, out of the most hard and flintie stone. In this place never had there binne water scene before: neither could there any since be founde; as hath well

*Praying  
vpon his  
knees and  
lifting his  
bandes to-  
wardes  
heauen  
he obtain-  
ed his peti-  
tion.*



appeared by diligent enquire and experience.

*Exod.*  
17. 6.  
4. *Reg.*  
4. 43.

But in what wonderfull manner Christ did by the merites of his poore servant, multiplie the meate in the Sea, considering that we are hereafter to set it downe in place conveniēt, thus much only it shall be sufficient in this place to haue rehearsed, that out of a small proportion of Almes bestowed vpon him he delivered the Marriners for many daies togeather, from the perill of famine of death: that thereby it may be well observed, that the servant of Almighty God, even as he was like vnto *Moyse*, in bringing water out of the Rock, so was he also like vnto *Eli*, in the multiplication of victualls. Good cause therefore it is that all diffidence should farre away departe from the servants and followers of Christ. For if the poverty of Saint *Francis*: were of so plentifull sufficiency, that by a wonderfull vertue it did so farre forth supply the wants of them by whome he was holpen in his neede, that they wanted neither meate, drink, nor house, when mony, arte; and nature did faile them, much more shall it deserue to obtaine those thinges which are by the accustomed order of Gods divine prouidence, commonly vouchsafed and granred vnto all men. If, I say, the drienesse of the rocke, haue at the voice of a poore man, yeelded drinke aboundantly to the thirstie, then shall nothing in the world denye service vnto them, who haue forsaken all thinges for love of the Author of all things,



THE EIGHT CHAPTER.

*Of his affection of Piety: and how creatures deuoied of reason, seemed to be affected towards him.*

**V**NFAINED pietie, which according vnto the Apostles saieng, is *Profitable to all things*, had so far forth penetrated and replenished the harte of S. Francis, that the man of God seemed wholly to be subiected therevnto. This is that vertue, which did by force of deuotiō, eleuate him aloft vp vnto God, which did by cōpassion transforme him, into Christ, which by way of condescending, declined him to his neighbour, & which by an vniuersal reconcilement and accord of all thinges, did refigure and againe restore him, vnto the state of innocency. And albeit that out of this pietie he were devoutly affected vnto all thinges: yet at such time especially, as he perceaued that the soules which were redemed with the precious blond of Christe Iesus, were defiled with any filth of sinne, he then bewailed them, with such a tenderesse of commiseration, that as a mother in Christe, he dailie laboured to bring them forth againe. And this was the special, cause that moved him so much to reuerence the ministers of the word of God: for that they doe both raise vpp seede to theire brother deceased namely vnto Christ, who vouchsafed to be crucified for sinners) by working the conversion of them; and being converted, doe also governe

*Tim. 4.8.*



them, with an industriouse & careful pietie. This excellent office of commiseration, he affirmed to be vnto the Father of mercie more acceptable than any sacrifice: especially when it proceedeth from the industrie of perfect charitie: whereby more diligent labour is employed therein by force of example, than by course of words, by mournful praiers, rather than by babling discourses. Wherevpon he would say, that that Preacher was much to be lamented as a man wholly destitute of true and perfect pietie; who, either in preaching, seeketh not the health of soules, but his owne priuate praise and glory; or who by the naughtinesse of his life, destroyeth what euer he buildeth vp, by the truth of doctrine. Before such an one therefore, he saied, that a simple and ignorant brother was far away to be preferred, who by his owne good example, prouoketh others also vnto the like. And to his effect he expounded that place of holy scripture; *Until the barren haue brought forth many children.* For the barren (saied he) is vnderstand to be that poore brother, whose proper office, is not to ingender children in the holy Church. But he neverthelesse, shal yet in the iudgment bring forth many children: because that such as by his private praiers he doth convert vnto Christe; shal then be by the Iudge, vnto his glory ascribed. And *she that hath many children, shal be enfeebled:* because the vaine and talking preacher who now glorieth of many children, as by meane of his owne labour and industrie begotten, shal the plainely knowe and discerne himselfe not to

haue

1. Reg.

2 5.



haue any right or interest in them at all. He therefore with all the hartie affection and desires of pietie, and with a burning and zealous emulation of minde, thirsting after the salvation and good of soules, was euer more accustomed to say, that he was as it were replenished with sweete odours and was in a maner annointed with a most precious and delightfull ointmente, so often as he hearde that many were induced vnto the way of truth, by the sweete smelling fame of his holy bretheren, dispersed through fundrie partes of the world. Vpon the hearing of these reports his spirit not a litle reioyced: heaping most acceptable and abundant blessings, vpon all those bretheren, who either by worde or deede, did induce sinners vnto the loue of Christ. But he contrariwise, whosoever, did by their euell demeanoure violate the holy state of Religion: did thereby incur the most greivouse sentence of his malediction: Of thee, O my most holy Lord (said he) and of all thy blessed courte of heauen, and of me thy poore and humble servant, be the al accursed, who by their euill example, doe confounde and destroy that which by the holy bretheren of this order, thou hast already builded, and doest not cease yet to build. And oftentimes he conceived so exceeding great forrowe and greife, vpon occasion of the scandall of weakelings, that he thought himself to haue beene almost dead therewithall, had he not beene vpholden by the consolation of Gods diuine clemencie. But one time especially being marveilouse much distressed with the euill



examples which he sawe to be given, and praing with a perplexed spirite vnto the father of mercie for his children: this maner of answere from our Lord he therevnto received. Why arte thou thus, thou poore and sillie man afflicted? haue I in such maner of wise ordained thee to be Pastor ouer this my religious order, that thou dost not knowe me to be the principall patrone and director thereof? For this cause haue I therunto designed thee being but a simple man: that what thinges I shall worke in thee, be to no humane industerie, but vnto the mightie power of God, ascribed. It is I who haue called them, I also will keepe them and feede them; and if some of them doe at any time falle away, I will subrogate other into their roomes againe: so farre forth that if they be not yet borne, I wil make them to be borne vpon purpose. And with how many assaults soeuer this my poore religion shalbe distressed, yet shal it ever abide in safte, by mine especiall gift and protection.

The vice of detraction also, he abhorred, as the professed enemy to the pure fountaine of grace and pietie, as the venemouse sting of a serpent, and as a most desperate and deadly payson, avowing the same to be most abhominable, in the sight of Gods most mercifull and sweete disposition: considering that the man of detraction is fed with the bloud of soules, which he doth murder with the fowrde of his tongue. And hearing once one of the bretheren to disgrace the good name and fame of another, he turned therewithall vnto

his



his Vicar, saying: arise, arise, discusse the matter diligently: and if you shal finde the brother accused to be innocent faile not with sharpe correction to chastice the accuser, wherby to make him an example in that behalfe vnto others. And sundrie times also he would iudge that brother who had dispoiled another of his good name and fame, to be himselfe deprived of his habite: and that he might not presume to liste vp his eies vnto our Lord, before he had done his best indeuour to restore that which he had vncharitably taken away, For so much greater said he is the impiety of detractors, than of open theiues and robbers, as the law of Christ which is fulfilled in the observance of piety, doth more precisely oblige vs to desire the well fare of our neighbours soules, than of their bodies.

And with a wonderfull tenderesse of compassion, commiserating the cause of all that were afflicted with any corporall grief or molestation, if he saw any penurie or defect in any man, he did with a notable sweetnesse of a most zealous affection induce him to relie vpon Christe, He had out of doubt, an ingrafted clemencie within him, which neverthelesse the superinfused pietie of Christ, doubled yet more and more vppon him. His minde therefore was even melted towards the poore and feeble, and vnto them whome he could not helpe with his hand, he reached forth his most hartly affection. It happened once that a certaine poore man. asking Almes with some importunity at the handes of one of the brethren,

the



the same brother returned an ouer hard and vngentle answere vnto him. Which being heard by this devout lover of the poore, he forthwith commaunded the brother, to cast himself downe naked, before the poore beggars secte, in such wise acknowledging himself to be faulty, craving also the help of his praier, & pardon for his offence. Vpon the humble performance whereof, the loving father sweetely spake thus vnto him: When thou seest any poore creature, O my brother, thou hast a liuely resemblance presented vnto thee of our Lord, and of his poore Mother. And likewise in the weake and feeble thou hast to consider the infirmities, which he vouchsafed to take vpon him. And when as in all poore people, himselfe also the most Christian poore man, did behold, the image & figure of Christe: vnto such of that sorte as he chanced to meete, he did not only with free liberality imparte of the necessary sustenances of life, which had binne given vnto himselfe, but as though they were properly their very owne, did adiudge that they ought of dutie to be rendred vnto them. Whervpon it fell out, that he returning once from *Sienna*, did meete a poore man in the way: at what time himselfe vpon occasion of speciall infirmitie, had a certaine kind of short cloake which he did weare aboue his habite. But beholding with a tender eye the misery of that poore man, he spake vnto his companion, saieing: we ought verily brother to restore this cloake vnto this poore man, it being of right his owne: for we tooke the same but as lent vnto vt, vntill we

might



might chance to finde another in greater neede thereof than our selues, But the brother considering the necessity of the good father, did very seriously and stiffly therein withstand him, in no wise assenting that meanwhile he provided for others, himselfe should remaine disappointed. Wherevnto he thus replied, I hold it, said he, for a matter of theft to be by the great Almes giver imputed vnto me, if this cloake, which I beare about me, I shall not giue vnto a more needy person. And therefore, whensoever any thing was given him to releiue the necessity of his body, he vsed to aske leaue of the giuers, that he might lawfully bestowe the same, vpon some poorer body than himselfe as he might happe to meete. He spared no manner of thing, neither cloakes, nor habbitts, nor bookes, nor ornaments also of the Aultar, but gaue them all to the poore as occasion required, to performe the office of pietie. And oftentimes when as he mette with poore men laden vpon the way, he vndertooke their burdens, vpon his owne weak and feeble shoulders.

And considering with aboundant piety the beginnings of all things created, he called even the least creatures by the name of Brother and Sister: because he knewe them to haue one and the same beginning with himselfe. But yet vnto those creatures aboue all others he did beare a most sweete and entire affection, which the Scriptures do testifie by a naturall likenesse to represent the meekenes of Christ. He oftentimes redeemed lambes.

which



Isa. 53. 7.

which were ledde to be killed: resting mindefull of that most milde Lambe, who would be ledde to the slaughter for redemption of sinners. It chaunced one time that the servant of God being lodged in the Monastery of Saint *Pericundus*, within the Bishopricke of *Eugubium* a certaine Ewe brought forth a yong lambe that very night. But a feirce and ravening Sowe that came by, not sparing the life of the poore innocent Lamb, did bite it to death with her cruell tuskes. Vpon the hearing whereof the good father being moved with a marveillous compassion, and remembring therewithall the vnspotted Lambe, lamented before the all for the death of the Lambe, saieing: O woe is me, my brother Lambe, innocent creature, representing Christ to the mindes of men, cursed be that wicked Sowe which hath killed thee, and let her not be meate for any, either man or beast: A marveilouse thing it is to tell. Forthwith that brutefull Sowe beganne to be sicke: and being punnished with three daies continuall paine in her body, sustained at length the vengeance of death. But being afterwarde throwen into the vale of the monasterie, and lieng there long time together she grewe so hard and drie as a board, that she was no meate for any hungar starven creature. Let the impiety of man therefore well weigh and consider with how great punnishment it is finally to be rewarded, if the crueltie of a beast doe appeare to haue binne smecten, with so terrible a kinde of death. And let the devout and faithfull man, noe lesse ponder and weigh with himselfe, of what



wonderfull vertue and sweetnesse, was the piety of the servant of God: considering that the nature of brute beasts did in their kinde applaude, & conform themselves vnto him. For making his iorney once neare to the Cittie of *Sienna*, he founde in the pastures a great heard of sheepe. Which when he had curteously saluted, according to his wonted manner, the sheepe leaving their pasture, ranne all vnto him: and lifting vp their heads, did fixe their eies directly vpon him. So great an applause they verely made vnto him, that both the sheppheards & the brethren marveiled not a litle therat: beholding not only the lambes of the sheep but also the Rammes themselves leaping and reioycing in such marveilous manner about him.

Another time also at our Ladies of *Portiuncula* a certaine sheepe was presented vnto the man of God: who gratefully received the same for loue of that innocencie and simplicitie, which the nature thereof pretendeth. This sheepe the deuoute man admonished, both to be attentiu vnto the praises of God, and also to be warie from all maner of offence to the bretheren. Wherevpon the sheepe, marking, as it were, and observing, the pietie of the servant of God; did very carefully obserue his rule and instruction. For hearing the bretheren to sing in the Quire, shee also entred into the Church without any direction, bowing her knees and bleating, before the Altar of the Virgin mother of the most vnspotted and innocent lambe; and that in such maner of wise as if she did delight and reioyce to salute her. And yet moreover,

when



When the  
most sacred  
body of  
Christ  
was eli-  
uated in  
time of  
Masse a  
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See how  
brut beasts  
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O reue-  
rence there  
god which  
miserable  
beretickes  
refuse  
to do.

when the most sacred body of Christ was elevated amidst the solemnities of the Masse, she also then did bend her knees: as if that the poore reverent beast, accused the vndevoure of their irreverence, and invited the devoute servantes of Christ vnto a further adoration of this most holy Sacrament. And one time he chanced for reverence of that most milde lambe of God, to haue in the cittrie with him a litle lambe, which he committed to the custodie of a noble Marrone, called *Madame Iacoba de septem satis*, to be by her norished in her clofette, but the lambe being instructed as it were by the Saints, in spirituall thinges, did alwaies with inseperable diligence attend vpon her, as she wente to the Church, all the time she remained there, & when she returned from thence. If it were long in the morning before she rose, the lambe rising vp, seemed to force her, as it were with his hornes, and with bleating voice to incite her, admonishing her aswell by gesture as by signes, to make hast to the Church. Wherefore this lambe the scholer of holy *S. Francis*, being now become a Maister of devotion, was by this noble woman kept, as worthy to be both loved and admired.

At *Gracium*, also vpon a time, a certaine yong leveret was given aliue, vnto the servant of God: which being set free vpon the ground, whereas it might haue gone which way it woulde: yet being by the good father called vnto him, it came forth with running & leaping into his bosome, making much of it therefore with great affection, he see-

med



med to haue compassion thereof, as a mother hath towarde her childe: and warning, it with sweet wordes, not againe: to let it self be taken, gaue it free leaue to departe. But being put oftentimes vpon the ground, and returning alwaies into the fathers bosome againe, as if it had some secreete feeling, of the inwarde pietie of his loving harte at length by the fathers commaundement it was brought by the bretheren, vnto some safer parts of the desert. In like maner also, in the Ile of the Lake of *Perusium* aliue cunnie was taken, and brought to the man of God: which though it thought to escape from all others besides, yet into his handes and bosome it committed it selfe, with a domesticall kinde of securitie. So also as he passed once to the desert of *Gracium* along by the Lake of *Reate*, a certain fisherman, of speciall devotion presented a river foule vnto him: after gratefull acceptaunce whereof, with opened handes he gaue it way to departe: though neverthelesse the foule remained with him, whervpon he lifting vp his eies, remained long in praier, and returning a long hower after vnto himselfe againe as it were from another world: he sweetely the second time commaunded the birde to departe and praise our Lord. After licence therefore with his blessing receaved, and pretending also a certaine kind of ioye, as by the gesture of her body appeared, she tooke her flight away. In the same lake also was brought vnto him a great fihe aliue: which he saluting as his custome was by the name of brother, did forthwith returne it againe into the wa-



ter, neere to the sheepe. But the fishe plaieng in the watter before the man of God, as being in a manner allured with his loue: would in no wise departe from the shippe, but vpon his licence & benediction formerlie obtained.

And yet also, another time, walkeng with one of the brethren, nigh vnto the Marshelandes of *Venice*, he found a great multitude of birdes, sitting and singing in the Thicket. Vpon sight whereof, he saied to his companions: Our Sisters the birdes doe praise their creatour: let vs therefore goe, into the middest among them, and there let vs sing our praises, and Canonically houers to our Lord. And being entred into the very middest of them all, the birdes never stirred out of their places: and for because in respect of their chirping noise, the holy man and his brother could not heare one another in saing their houers: he therefore turning himselfe to the birdes, spake thus vnto them. ye birds, my sisters, leaue of your singing vntill we may haue performed the due praises we owe to God. The birdes presently surceased all manner of noise: and continewed all that while in silence: vntill the said houers and praises being leisurely performed, they were licensed by the Saint of God to sing againe. But so soone as the man of God had giuen this licence vnto them, they presently betooke themselves to their former singing.

So also at *s. Maria de Portiuncula*, a certain Grashopper sitting & singing vpon a figg tree, nigh vnto the Cell of this holy man, and having with her frequent



quent voice, incited the Seruant of God to diuine praises, who even in small thinges had learnt to admire the magnificence of the Almighty Creatour: he called her one day vnto him, at what time, shee, as being therevnto from heaven instructed came flieng by and by vpon his hand. To whome when he had said, Sing my sister Grashopper, and with thy chirping voice, praise thy Lord and Creator, she obcieng, without any stay beganne to sing, never ceasing, vntill by the commaundement of the Father, she flew backe againe to her vsuall place of abiding. But there this Grashopper remained eight daies together, day by day comming, singing, and departing, according to the Fathers commaundement. Wherevpon at length the man of God saied to his companions, Let vs now licence our Sister Grashopper to depart: for she hath now sufficiently delighted vs with her singing, having for eight daies space together stirred vp our mindes therewithall, to the praise of Almighty God. And presently vpon leaue obtained, the Grashopper depared from him not comming any more to that place, as in noe wise daring to transgresse his commaundement.

As once he lay sicke at Sienna, a certaine noble man sent him a liue Pheasant Cock, which had binne newly taken: this Cock had no soner seene and heard the holy man, but that he adheard vnto him with so great a lovingnesse, that he would by no meanes suffer himselfe to be disioined from him. For being oftentimes put out of the brothers



harbour, into a certaine vineyarde by, to the ende that if he would he might departe, he swiftly alwaies returned vnto the father againe: as if he had all his time bin by him brought vp and nourished. But being at length bestowed vpon a certain man, who was accustomed out of devotion to visite the servant of God; the pheasant as if it had binne grievouse vnto him to be absented from the good Fathers sight, refused to take any manner of meat. Whereas afterwarde being returned to the servant of God, he eate his meate very greedily, by outward gesture discovering his inward ioy.

When he came to the desert of *Aluerna*, to celebrate the Lent which he observed in honor of *S. Michael* the Archangel, divers sortes of birdes came flieng about his Cell, who reioicing as it were at his comming, did with their pleasant harmony and other tokens of mirth seeme to invite and allure the devoute father to stay and abide with the. Which when he well perceaued, he said to his companion: I see plainly brother it is the verie will of God that we should now stay heere for a while, because our Sisters the birdes doe seeme to be so much comforted at our presence. And whiles he therefore remained in that place a faulcon there building her nest: was ioined vnto him in a singular manner of frendshippe. For with her singing and noise, she did continually in the night time, prevent the hower whereat the holy man was accustomed to rise, to his divine service which was a thing most acceptable vnto the servant of God: for that the so great watchfullnesse  
of



of this fauleon ouer him, did cause him to shake  
of all sloth and slugishenes. But when the servant  
of Christ was more than vsually afflicted with any  
kind of infirmitie, then did the faulcon in some  
sorte abstaine, neither did shee at those times a-  
wake him so carely but as it were instructed ther-  
vnto of God; about the breake of day she gaue a  
gentle knocke with the bell of her voice: & sure-  
ly it seemeth, that this reioicing of birdes of ma-  
ny kindes, and that the singing also of the faulco,  
should be a diuine foresignification: that this no-  
table praiser and most excellēt worshipper of God,  
being carried aloft by the wings of contempla-  
tion should then be there exalted: by a Seraphicall  
apparition.

During the time he once aboard in the Ermitage  
of *Grecium*: the inhabitants in that place, were  
grievously afflicted, with many and sundry evils.  
For not only a multitude of ravening wolues did  
thereaboutes consume both men and beasts, but  
a yearely and violent Tempest also of haile, did  
continually destroy, the corne and vineyardes. At  
what time therefore as this denouncer of Gods  
holy Gospell preached vnto them in the midst  
of this their distresse and affliction, he saied vnto  
them: to the honor and praise of Almighty God,  
I require you to be of good hope, that all this pe-  
stilence shall soone forsake you, and that our Lord  
with his mercifull eies regarding you, will multi-  
plie you in temporall goodes, if crediting my  
wordes, you will nowe first of all beginne to take  
compassion vppon your selues: whereby ma-



king a true confession of your sinnes, you may bring forth the workes worthy of penance. But this againe I denounce vnto you, that if as vngreatefull men for such benefits, you shall returne to your vomite againe: then shall your plague be renewed, your punishment shalbe redoubled, and a greater indignation shall iustly fall vpon you. From that very hower the people doing penance according as he exhorted them, their miseries ceased, their daungers were all at an end: & neither the wolues nor the haile did any more mischief among them. Nay which is more to be admired, if the neighbours fieldes, were at any tyme endangered with haile, so soone as it approached vnto their confines, either there it rested, or els diverted to some other parte. Thus not only the haile did cease, but the wolues also kept the covenante of the seruant of God, neither did they offer any more contrary to the law of piety to incourage against men converted vnto God, so longe as they according to their promise, did not wickedly transgresse against the lawes of God. Wherefore we haue good cause, devoutly to thinke of the piety of this blessed man: which was of so marvellous sweetenesse and efficacy that it tamed wilde creatures in so much that those of the woodes it made live in howses, & made double thrice those which were of more gentle nature, it did incline the nature of brute beastes which hath binne since the fall of man rebellious against him, to become now obedient vnto him. This verely is that vertue which confederating all creatures with it selfe, is



*profitable to all thinges : having promise of the life that now is, and of that to come.*

### THE NINTH CHAPTER.

*Of the fervour of his Charity, and of his desire of Martirdome.*

**B**V T that fervent Charitie, Wherewith this friend of the spouse, Saint Francis, was altogether inflamed, what man may be able sufficiently to expresse? For as a certaine fierie coale, he seemed to be wholly absorbt in the flame of Gods loue. For suddainely vpon the very hearing of the loue God he was forthwith stirred vp, he was in marveilouse manner affected, and wholly set on fire: as though with the outward stroake of the voice; the inwarde string of the harte were touched. And therefore to offer such manner of tribute insteede of Allmes, he saied it was a noble kinde of prodigality: and those that esteemed thereof lesse than of mony, he held to be most foolishe, considering that the vprisable valewe of the only loue of God, is abundantly sufficient to gaine the Kingdome of heaven: and that the loue of him who loued vs much, is much to be loued and esteemed. But to the end he might be out of all rhings provoked vnto the loue of God, he marveilously reioiced in all the workes of our Lord his handes: and by the mirrours of delight-somnesse, he raised vp himself into the liuely originall and cause of them: For he did beholde in



the things that were beautifull, him that was most beautifull of all: and by the perfections imprinted in all things the euery where prosecuted the thing beloued; making as it were vnto himselfe, a ladder of all things, whereby he might ascend and take hold of him, who is altogether & wholly to be desired. For with an affection of devotion more than had binne heard of, he tasted in euery of the creatures as it were in litle Rivers, that excellent goodnesse of the fountaine it self; and as if he had conceaved a heauenly harmony, in the consonantes of the vertues and actions giuen by God vnto them, he sweetely exhorted them, according to the manner of the prophet D A V I D, vnto the honour and praise of Almighty God.

*Loe, the  
abstinence  
of this  
holy Fa-  
ther note  
his fastings  
& praier  
these are  
the exer-  
cise of  
true  
monkes*

Christ Iesus crucified evermore remained as a handefull of Mirrhe within the bolome of his minde into whome he desired to be through the fervour of most excessiue loue in euery parte transformed. And for a prerogative of a peculier devotion vnto him, from the feast of the Holie Epiphanie, during the space of full forty daies together, that is to say during all that time whearin Christe remained solitary in the desert, he also be taking himselfe to solitary places, and being in his Cell retired, did with wonderfull strictnesse as well of meate as of drinck in fastings and praiers, continually attend to the praises of God. So feruent was that affection, wherewith he was carried vnto Christ. But Christ his well beloved, did requite him againe, with so familiar a kinde of loue, that it seemed vnto him the servant of God, as if he had



had the continuall preſence of his Saviour before his eyes: according as he ſometimes familiarly declared vnto his companiōs. He burned with an admirable ſeruiour of al his hart & ſoule, towards the bleſſed Sacrament of our Lord his body: wondering with an vnſpeakable amazement, at that moſt charitable condeſcending, and moſt condeſcending charity: He did oftentimes communicate, and that with ſo great devotion, that he made others alſo to be deuote by his example: whileſt he at the ſweete taſting of the immaculate Lambe, was as one drunck in ſpirit, raviſhed for the moſt part into an extaſie of minde. He loved the mother of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt with an vnſpeakable loue: for that by her the Lord of Maieſtie, is become a brother vnto vs, and we by her haue happily obtained mercy. In her next after Chriſt, he repoſed his principall confidence & her he did moſt eſpecially chooſe, to be the Advocatrix for himſelfe and all his brethren. And to her honor, he did moſt devoutly faſt, from the feaſt of the holy Apoſtles Saint Peter & Saint Paul vntill the feaſt of her Aſſumption. Vnto the Angelicall ſpirits alſo, conſidering them to burne with a maveilouſe fire of exceſſiue loue towards God, and of inflaming the ſoules of the elect therewithall; he was conioined with an inſeparable band of loue: and for devotion towards them he faſted fortie daies from the Aſſumption of the glorious virgin, attending all that time vnto continuall praier. But vnto bleſſed Saint Michael, the Archangell, for that it belonged vnto his office to

*Let the  
hereticks  
be ye con-  
sider the  
denotion  
of this  
Saint to  
our B.  
Lady the  
Mother  
of God  
in her  
eſpecially  
after  
Chriſt he  
put ſpeciall  
confidence  
in her  
made an  
advocate  
for him-  
ſelfe and  
his bre-  
theren.*



represent the soules he was the more devoted in an especiall bonde of loue, the rather for the fervent zeale he bare vnto the saluation of all the elect. And as concerning the Saints, out of the remembrance of all them, as out of fierie stones, he grewe to be more aboundantly inflamed in the vnquencheable zeale and loue of God: bearing towards all the Apostles, and specially to Sainct *Peter* and Sainct *Paule*, for the exceeding charitie which they had towards Christe, a most principall and rare devorion: and for the reverence and loue of them, he dedicated vnto our Lord a peculiar Lenten observance.

This poore man of Christ had no more but two mites, his body namely and his soule, to giue vnto God with liberall charitie. But these two he spared not for the loue of Christ to offer vp so continually, that as it were all his life time, he sacrificed his body, by the rigour of abstinence. and his spirit by the fervour of desire, exteriorly in the Porche of his body immolating the burnt sacrifice, and in the temple of his soule inwardly beginning the sweete smelling incense, of devotion. But yet for all this so was he borne alofte to divine things by the excessiue devotion of charity, that neuerthelesse his affectuous benignity did dilate it selfe vnto his Copartners in nature and grace. For whome the singular pierie of his hart had made to be a brother vnto all creatures besides him, it is no marvaile if the charity of Christ did make to be much more a brother vnto creatures ennobled with the Image of their creatour, and redeemed

with



with the bloude of theire maker. And therefore he repured not himselfe to be the friend of Christ vnlesse he did cherishe the soules, which he had redeemed. He saied that nothing was to be preferred before the wellfare of soules, approvinge the same especially by this, that the only begotten soone of God, vouchsafed for the loue of them to hang vpon the Crosse. And from hence proceeded his combatte in praier, his discourse in preaching, and his excelle in giving good example. Wherevpon so often, as ouer much austerity was reprehended in him, he made answere that he was giuen for an example vnto other men, For notwithstanding that his innocent flesh, which had now willingly and freely subiected it selfe to the spirit, stode no waies in neede of any scourge at all, for his owne offences; yet for examples sake he daily renewed both paines and burdens vppon himselfe, keeping hard waies for other mens instruction. For he vsed to say, *If I speake with the tongues of men and of Angells and haue not Charity, in my selfe, whereby to giue example of vertue vnto my neighbours: I profite others but litle, and my selfe no white at all.*

And with a fervent inflammation of charitie, he did emulate the glorious triumphe of the holy Martirs: for that in them neither could the flame of loue, be extinguished, nor yet could the stability of fortitude, be any way infeeble. Wherefore being wholly set on fire, with that perfecte charity, which casteth out feare, he also desireth by the flame of Martirdome to offer himselfe as a  
living



living sacrifice vnto our Lord: to the end he might make requitall, according to his power. vnto Christ that suffered death for vs vpon the Crosse, and might also provoke others by his example vnto the loue of God: For in the sixt yeare after his conversion, burning altogether in desire of Martirdome, he purposed to passe the seas vnto the partes of *Siria*, to preach the Christian faith and pennance, vnto the *Saracens*, and other infidelles, And being gotten aboarde into a certaine shippe, that made for those partes, by meane of contrary winds, he was inforced to put a shore vpon the coaste of *salanonia*. Where having made some tyme of abode, and not having founde any shippe in all that space prepared to passe the Seas: he thereby perceiving himselfe to be disappointed of his desires, made earnest request vnto certaine Mariners, euen then prepared for *Ancona*, that for the loue of God they would take him along with them. But they obstinately refusing him, as not having wherewith to defray his charges: the mā of God singulerly reposing vpon the goodnesse of our Lord, entred secretly into the shippe, himself and his companion with him. At that time fortunē to be there, a certaine man, of Gods owne sending, as is to be thought, for the relief of his poore seruant: who bringing with him necessary provision of victuals, and calling vnto him one of the shippe, that had the feare of God before him, delivered the same vnto him, saieng, keepe these things faithfully for the poore brethren, that lie secret in the shippe, and in the time of neede, im-



parte thereof friendly vnto them. And so it came to passe that when the shippemen, labouring by force of the windes for many daies together, and all that time not being able to get to lande, had in the meane while expended all their provisions yet still vnto poore Saint Francis remained, of that Almes which was by Gods appointement reserved for him. Which neverthelesse, though it were but very small, was yet by Gods devine power, so marveilously multiplied, that they making very many daies aboade vpon the Sea, it abundantly supplied all their necessities euen vntill they came vnto the very Porte of *Ancona*. The marriners therefore perceiving themselves by meane of the servant of God to haue escaped many daungers of death: as men who had seene the horrible daungers of the Sea and had also well observed the wonderfull workes of our Lord in the deepe gaue thanks therefore vnto Almighty God: who sheweth himselfe alwaies in his friends and servants to be marveilouse, and worthy to be beloued. But the servant of God having now left the Sea, and beginning, to walke vpon the lande, casting vpon the grounde, the seede of saluation, reaped thereof, fruitfull handefulles in the time of harvest.

Yet neverthelesse for so much as the fruit of Martirdome had so farre forth allured his harte, that aboue all the merites of vertues he longed to suffer a precious death for Christ, he tooke his way towardes *Morgoco*, there to preache the Gospel of Christ vnto *Miramolina* and his people; if so

by



by any meanes he might attaine vnto the desired crowne of Martirdome. For he was borne along with so fervent a desire therof, that albeit he were very weake of body, he did neverthelesse outgoe his companion, in travell, and being full of speede to bring his purpose to effect, did flie away, as it were, for very druckeneffe & fervour of spirite. But being now already come into *Spaine*, by Gods sweete disposition which reserved him for other things, there came vpon him a most grievous infirmitie, whereby he was so hindered that he could in no wile accomplish what he so much desired. The man of God therefore perceivinge that his life in the flesh, was yet necessary for the yssue which he had begotten, albeit that he esteemed death as a gaine for himselfe: therefore returned to feede the sheepe, which were by Almighty God, vnto his care, commended.

But the burning fire of charity, more then informing his spirir vnto Martirdome, he yet the third time adventured, for spreading abroad the faith of the holy Trinity, to travell into the parts of the infideles. For in the thirteenth yeare after his conversion, hastening towarde the partes of *Siria*, he constantly exposed himselfe vnto many daungers, that he might come to the *Souldan* of *Babylon*. For at that time was betweene the Christians & the *Sarasens* a warre so implacable, and the Tents also of the Armies on either part, so closely pitched, that no way of mutuall passage remained, but with imminent danger of death. For the *soldan* had given out a cruell edict: that

who-



whosoever could bring the head of any Christian, should receive a golden crowne of *Bizance* for his reward. But the hardie warrior of Christ Saint Francis, hoping that now shortly his purpose might be obtained, determined to undertake the iourney being nothing terrified with the feare of death, but much provoked with the desire thereof. Wherefore after prayer before hand made, he being comforted and strengthened by the hands of our Lord, did confidently sing that verse of the Prophetesse,

*For although I shall walke in the midst of the shadow of death I will not feare evils because thou art with me.*

Taking with him therefore a companion, brother *Huminatus* by name, a man verely both of light & vertue, as he was entred in his way, he met two litle sheepe, vpon the sight whereof, the holy man was marveilously reioiced, and said vnto his companion; Be of good hope in our Lord my brother, for in vs that word of the Gospell is fulfilled:

*Behold I send you as sheepe in the midst of wolves.*

But being gone a litle further they mette with *Saracene* officers: who running as very wolves indeed vpon the poore sheepe, and feircely laieng hands vpon them the seruants of God, did in very cruell and contemprible manner intreate them: dishonoring them with reproaches, afflicting them with stripes, and binding them in bands. Vntill that hauing binne many and sundry wayes afflicted and distressed, they were at length by Godes diuine providence, brought vnto the *Souldane*, according to the man of Godes desire. Who beeing of that great Prince demaunded, from what per-

*Psal. 22. 4.*

*Mat. 10. 16.*



sons, to what purpose, and in what manner, they had bin sent; as also by what meanes they had so farre arrived the servant of Christ. Sainct *Francis*, with a couragious harte made answer, that he was not sent from man, but from God Almighty himselfe, to shew vnto him and his people the way of salvation, and to preach vnto them the Gospell of truth.

*Luc. 21. 18.*

But with so great constancy of minde, with so efficacious power of the soule, and so rare a fervour of spirite, did he preache vnto the foresaide Souldan, one only God in Trinity, and Iesus Christ the Saviour of mankind: that in him that place of the Gospell well appeered to be accomplished, which saith, *I will giue you a mouth and wisdom, which all your aduersaries shall not be able to resist and gainsay.* For the very Souldan himselfe beholding in the man of God an admirable fervour of spirite, and singuler vertue therewithall did both willingly giue eare vnto him, and did also the more instantly invite him to make longer abode with him. But the servant of Christ enlightened with Gods divine Oracle, if thou wilt, said he: with thy people be converted vnto Christe: I will for his loue willingly remayne amonge you, But if you make doubt for the faith of Christe, to refuse the law of Mahomet, commaunde then a very great fire to be kindled, and I together with thy Priests will enter into the same; that yet so at least thou maiest well discerne, which faith is of very right to be held, for more holy and certaine. Wherevnto the Souldan answered, I doe not be-

lieue



lieue that any of my priests wil for defēce of their  
faith, ether expose theselues to the fire or other wil  
vndertake any kind of tormēt. For he had sene one  
of his priests, a mā of special years & authority, im-  
mediatly vpon the hearing of those words to haue  
withdrawen himself out of his sight. Then said the  
holy man vnto him, If thou wilt for thy self & thy  
people make promise vnto me, to come to the ser-  
vice of Christ, if I shal without harm passe through  
the fire: I wil enter, into the same my self a'one: & if  
I shalbe burnt, be it imputed to my sins, but if the  
mighty power of God shal protect me, acknow-  
ledg then Christ the power & wisdom of God to  
be himself very God, & vndoubted Lord & saviour  
of al mākind. But the *saldā* answered, that he durst  
not accept of this conditiō for that he feared a se-  
ditiō among the people. Neverthelesse they offered  
vnto him many pretious rewards al which the man  
of God, being no waies covetous of wordly things,  
but altogether desirouse of the saluation of souls,  
did vtterly reiecte as durt. Whereby the Souldan  
perceiving the holy man to be so perfect a contem-  
ner of wordly things: & being also moved with ad-  
miracion therof, conceyved in himself a far greater  
devotion towards him. And albeit that he would  
not, or that perhaps he durst not receive the Chri-  
stian faith, yet did he instantly beseeche the ser-  
vant of Christ to accept of the forsaide gifts to  
be for his soules health bestowed vpon Christian  
poore people or to the vse of their Churches. But  
he for that he eschewed the burden of mony, and  
did not see the rote of true piety to be in the mind



of the Souldan, would in no wise be perswaded therevnto. And furthermore perceiving that he did not prevaile in the conversion of that nation neither yet could attaine vnto his purpose therein vpon forewarning by revelation from heaven received, he made his returne vnto the partes of the faithfull. And so both mercifully and marveilously it came to passe, by the clemencie of God soe ordaining. and by the vertue of the holy man promerriting the same, that this friende of Christ did for his loue seeke after deathe with all his whole desire, and could by no meanes find it: whereby he might not want the merite of most desired Martirdome; but might be yet reserved, to be afterwardes insigned with a singuler priuiledge. And by that meanes was it also effected, that, that diuine fire did yet more perfectly escape and boile in his harte, that afterwardes it might more powerfully, flame and burst out in his flesh. O holy man, most truly blessed: whose flesh although it be not cut with the sworde of the Tyrant doth not yet wante the similitude of the Lambe that was slaine, O truly and perfectly blessed (I say, whose life although the sworde of the persecutor did not take away, yet did he not loose the Glory of Martyrdome.

#### THE TENTH CHAPTER.

*Of his diligence and fervency in praier.*

**T**HE holy servant of Christ Saint Francis, perceiving that in body he was as yet a pilgrime

from



from God, albeit that vnto earthly desires, he was already, through the charity of Christ, become altogether insensible: yet to the ende he might not be without the consolation of his wellbeloved, attending vnto praier without intermission. he endeavoured to offer vp his spirit before the presence of God. And praier, doubtlesse was a solace vnto him, in his contemplation, meane while that in the circuire of the heavenly mansions, he being already made a fellow Cittizen of Angells, did with fervent desire seeke after his welbeloved: from whom none other thing but the wall of his flesh did now disioyne him. This also was a helpe vnto him in worke & labour namely that in all the thinges he tooke in hande; distrusting his owne industrie, and firmly reposing vppon Gods heauenly piety, he did by the instancy therof cast all his thought vpon our Lord. He firmly avowed that promptnesse in praier was aboue all things to be desired on the parte of a religious man: & verely believing that without the same no man might be able to prosper in the service of God, he did by all the meanes he might stirre vp his brethren vnto the diligent exercise thereof. For, walking and setting, within doores and abroade, labouring and recreating, he was evermore so attentive vnto praier, that he seemed, not only for what was in him either in harte or body, but in labour also and time, to haue dedicated and devoted all wholly therevnto, He was alwaies heedfull, at no time negligently to overpasse any visitation of the spirit. For when it

2. Cr. 5. 7.

1. Thef.

5. 17.

Beholde  
how neces-  
sary praier  
is to a re-  
ligious  
man.



2. Cor. 6. 1.

was offered vnto him, he followed the same: and so long as our Lord vouchsafed to graunt it, he comfortably enioied the sweetenesse thereof: And even at such very times as he was seriously intentive to trauell, when he founde in himselfe any sweete motions, Gods heavenly spiritt, he suffering his brethren to goe before him, did for a while make stay in the place, and by that meanes converting the new inspiration vnto a present fruition, he did not receaue the grace in vaine.

Ofrentimes he was lifted vp with so great an excelle of contemplation, that being ravished aboue himselfe, and finding within him something beyond humane sence and vnderstandinge he did not know what was exteriorly donne about him. For passing one time through the Borough of Saint *Sepulcher* a Towne doubtlesse very populous and well replenished, he beeing then borne vpon an Asse by reason of the feeblenesse of his body, did meete a great multitude of people which came thronging vpon him for very devotion. But being by them, pulled, halled; and detained, as also crushed, and many waies pressed, he seemed to be in all those things vn sensible: and as a body devoided of life did not obserue what was donne about him. In so much having now a good way passed the towne, and being freed of the multitudes, when he came vnto a certaine Hospitall of the *Leapours*, the contemplator of heavenly things returning euen then as it were from another world, demaunded diligently of his company when they should come nigh to the Borough.



rougher. For verely his minde being fixed in the beames of heavenly Glory, did not discern the variety of places, and times, nor yet of the persons, that frequently came to meete him. And the like hearevnto, the manifold experience of his companions, hath well testified, very often to haue befallen vnto him. And for so much as in praier he had fully perceaved, that the much desired presence of the holy-Ghost, did so much the more familiarly offer it self vnto them that attend vnto praier, by how much as he did finde them to be more alienated and enstraunged, from the disturbance of worldly things: he therefore seeking after solitary places, did in the night tyme resorte, by reason of praier, into the Deserts, and Churches at that time vnfrequented. Howbeit that in those places he very many times sustained most horrible assaults of the Divells: whose sensibly entring into combatte with him, endeavored to disturbe him from the exercise of praier. But he armed with Gods heavenly weapons, looke how much the more vehemently he was assailed by his enemies, so much the more strong did he become in power of resistance, so much the more fervēt & perseverant he was in the accomplishment of his praier. Confidently vsing this speache vnto Christ, *Under the shadow of thy wings, do thou protect me: from the face of the wicked, who haue afflicted me.* But vnto the Devils he said; spare not to worke vpon me, al that you are able, O ye malignāt & deceitful spirits, For yee can doe nothing, but as the hand of God, letteth loose the reines vnto you: and I for my parte

*Psal. 16. 8.*



am ready with all willingnesse of minde to sustain whatsoever he hath determined to be inflicted vpon me, Which constancy of his minde, the proude Diuels not being able to abide, departed away from him, with shame and confusion.

*He praieth  
with his  
hand stret-  
ched out a  
croſſe.*

But the man of God now remaining solitarie, & vndisturbed, filled the woodes, with dolorouse groanes, he sprinkled his places of abode, with teares he beate vpon his breast with his hand: and having gotten as it were a secrete place of residence, he had free conference with his Lord and Maister. There he made answere for himselfe, before his Iudge; there he made supplication, vnto his Father, there he familiarly discoursed with his beloued friend. There also he was sometime heard by his brethren, that devoutly obserued him; with clamorous groanes, to call vnto Gods deuiue clemency in the behalf of sinners: with lowde voice also to bewaile our Lord his passion, even in such wise, as if it had then visibly bin set before him. There was he seene in the night season, praieing with his handes stretcht out a croſſe, his whole body being lifted vp on high from the ground; and rounde about environed, with a brrght and gloriouse cloude: so that, of that marveilouse garnishing, which he had inwardly in his minde, the admirable glorious light, which outwardly appeared about his body, might be an vndoubted testimony. Even there also, according as it is approved by most evident tokens, the vncertaine & hidden points of Gods diuine wisdom were discovered vnto him: albeit that he did in no sorte

exte-



exteriorly diuulge them, otherwise then as his charity towards Christ, did inforce him, and the profite of his neighbour, did especially require him. For he would commonly say, that for a very mean and light hire, a thing of inestimable praice and valewe happeneth oftentimes to be vtterly lost: & that he who gaue the same, is easily provoked in no wise to giue the like againe.

Evermore when he returned from his private prayers, by the which he was almost chaunged into another man; he was especially carefull to conforme himself vnto others; least haply that which had bin outwardly discovered, might by the breath of humane favour, be inwardly evacuated: of merite and reward. And therefore when in some publicke place, he had bin at any time visited by our Lord, he alwaies gaue some other matter of object, vnto the standers by, least that the familiar loue tokens of the spouse, should be outwardely obserued, and reported abroad. As for much spitting, groaning, deepe sighes, and outward gestures, during the time he praied amongst his bretheren, he altogether eschewed them: either because he loued to be secrete, in those thinges, or els because in his inward cogitatio, he was whole borne vp alofte into God. And oftentimes in this sorte he would speake vnto his familiars, when the servant of God, in time of praier is visited from aboue, he ought forthwith to say vnto him, Thou O Lord, hast sent this comfort from heaven vnto me a sinner and vnworthy person, and I committe the same againe vnto thy custody, because I



perceauē my selfe to be but a robber of thy diuine treasure, And when he returneth from prayer, he ought to shewe himselfe as very a poore wretch and as much a sinner, as if he had obtained no such new grace an fauour at all

But it chaunced vpon a time when the man of God was praieng in the place of *Portiuncula* that the Bishopp of *Assisium* came vnto him to visite him, according to his accustomed manner. Who so soone as he entred into the place, did ouer boldly approach vnto the Cell whearein the seruant of Christ did pray, but having knockt at the little doore, and putting forward himselfe to enter in, no sooner had he put in his head and scene the holy man at praier, but being stricken with a soddeine feare, all the partes of his body did loose their strength, and his vety speach did also leaue him. Moreover he being through Gods diuine will, by force driven out of the place, was suddenly borne backe a good way of. Whereat the Bishoppe being much astonished, made hast to the brethren as fast as he could: and God then restoring vnto him his speache againe; in the first wordes he spake, he confessed his fault.

One other time also it happened, that the Abbot of the monastery of *S. Iustine*, which is within the Bishoppricke of *Perusium*, did meete the seruant of Christe. Vpon whose sight, the devout Abbot did speedily alight from his horse: aswell to doe, reuerence vnto the man of God; as also to conferre with him vpon some things concerning the health & well fare of his soule. And at length

after



after sweete conference passed betweene them, the Abbot departed, humbly desiring him, to pray for him. To whom the beloved servant of God, answered, I will pray for you willingly. So the Abbot being nowe gone a little way of the faithfull man Saint Francis, saied vnto his companion, expecte a while my brother because I desire to pay the debt, which I haue promised. But meane while that he continued in prayer, the Abbot suddenly felt in himselfe in an vnusuall kinde of warmeth and sweetnes, vntill that time altogether vnknown vnto him: and that in such degree, that being brought into an extasie of the minde, he failed wholly from himselfe into Almighty God. And so for some little space he remained: but afterwards returning into himselfe againe, he did well perceiue the efficacie of the prayer of holy Saint Francis. For which cause he was evermore inflamed with a greater love vnto the Order, and vnto many he reported this fact for a miracle.

The holy man was alwaies accustomed, with no lesse reverent feare, then attentiu devotion, to recite his Canonick howers. For notwithstanding that he was troubled with the infirmity of his eies, of his stomacke, of his spleene and liuer: yet would he not leane against any wall or resting place while he did sing his seruice: but euermore accomplisshed his howers, bearing himself vpright, with his head vncouered, his eies, vnremoued, and without any manner of cutting shorte his wordes and sentences. And if at any time he were in iorney, he neuerthelessse made stay for the time, in no

*Behold the  
wonder-  
full force  
of Saint  
Francis his  
prayer.*

*Loe with  
what de-  
votion &  
attention  
he recite  
his canoni-  
call how-  
ers.*



sorte omitting this holy and reuerent custome, for whatsoeuer abondance of raine and flouds, that might come vpon him. For thus he would often say. If the body doe quietly eate this present foode which shall with the same become the meate of wormes: with howe great peace and quiernesle is it then expediēt for the soule to receiue the foode and sustenance of life. Wherefore he did thinke himselfe greivously to offend, if at any time while he was at prayer, he were inwardly distracted with vaine fantasies. And when any such thing had chaunced to befall; he made no spare, forthwith by confession to purge himselfe thereof. Which his so singuler a care, he had converted into to vtual an habite, that he was exceeding rarely troubled with such kinde of flees,

He had in one lent season, made a certaine litle vessel to over passe some short moments of time, that they also, might not be lost in idlenesse. Which comming once into his memory as he was saying his third hower, & hauing then in some litle degree distracted his minde: he was there vpon so moved with feruour of spiritte, that he consumed the same in the fire saying: I wil sacrifice it vnto our Lord, whose sacrifice it hath impeached. He vsed to recite his psalmes with soe great attention of minde and spiritte, as if he had God ever present before him: and when he chanced in them to finde the name of our Lord, he seemed euen to licke his lipps, for the very aboudant delight, of the sweetnesse, he tasted therein. And being also desirous with a most especiall reverence to honour the ve-



ry name of our Lorde, and that not only thought, but also named and written: he did sometimes perswade his brethren, together vp all the litle scrapps of paper that might any where be founde, containing the same, & them to put, in some cleane and decent place, least it might haply chance, that the sacred name written therein should be trodden vnder foote. But the name of Iesus, when he did either speake it or heare it, did inwardly so fill him with such a singuler kinde of exultation, that he thereby seemed to be altogether chaunged, euen exteriorly, as if some mellifluous sweetenes had altered his tast, or some harmoniacall sounde his hearing.

But in the third yeare before his death, it came to passe, that for the stirring vp of greater devotion, he purposed to celebrate the festivall memorie of the birth of the childe Iesus, at the village of *Gracium*, withal the greatest solemnity that possibly he could. And to the end the same might not be imputed to levitie: he craved licence of the Pope; and having obtained the same, he caused a manger to be prepared, as also hay to be gotten, and an oxe and an Asse to be brought to the place. The brethren were called together; the people assembled themselves, the woode adioyning was full of voyces, and that venerable night, was by meane of many cleare shining lights, of lowde soundinge and harmoniacall praises, made to be, both very light some, and full of solemnity. There stood the man of God before the manger, full of devotion, besprinkled with teares: and overcome with ioy.



The holy sacrifice of the Masse was solemnely celebrated vpon the manger, & the Leuite of Christe S. FRANCIS, did sing the Ghospell. And afterwards, vnto the people that stood about him, he preached of the nativity of the poore King: and ever as he named him, he did for the very tender-nesse of loue, call him the child of Bethlem. But in this meane while, a certaine souldier, of great vertue and creditte, called *Maister Iohn of Gracium*, who hauing for the loue of Christe forsaken the secular warfare, was now in great familiarity conioined vnto this seruant of God, did testifie himselfe to haue seene, a litle child of great comlineesse lying a sleepe in that manger: whom, the Blessed Father S. Francis embracing in both his armes, did seem to wake out of his sleepe. And this vision of the devout souldier, not only the holinesse of him that beheld the same, did make to be credible: but the very eident truth thereof, did vndoubtedly approue it, and the miracles succeding, did also confirme it. For the example of holy S. Francis, being considered of the world, is of great force to stirre vp the harts of such as are heauie and dull in the faith of Christe, and the hay of that manger being by the people reserued, was in marveilouse manner effectuell, for the recouerie of sicke Cattell, and a singuler preservative against diuers other pestilences. God Almighty in all things glorifying his seruant, & demonstrating the efficacy of holy prayer, by manifest wonders and miracles.

man of God before the manger full of devotion  
 THE



## THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

*Of his, vnderstanding the scriptures, and of his  
spirite of prophecy.*

**B**V T vnto so great a perspicacity of minde, had the vnwearied custome of prayer, together with the continuall exercise of vertues, brought this holy man of God, that albeit he had no skill in the holy sacred scriptures by the ordinarie course of learning, yet nevertheless being enlightened with the beames of eternall light, he did searche the depth of them with a wonderfull sharpenesse of vnderstanding. For his conceite being pure from all manner of blemish, did penetrate into the most hidden misteries: and where the science of the Doctour did stand without doores, even there was the affection of the lover, admitted to enter in. Sometimes he did reade in the holy bookes, and what soeuer he did once take in his minde, he did most firmly imprint in his memory: not hearing any thing in vaine, with the bare present attention of his minde, but ruminating therevpon, with an affection of continuall devotion. And being once demanded by his brethren, if he did like, that the men of learning, who were already admitted vnto the order, should still attend vnto the study of the holy scriptures, he answered. It liketh me truly very well, but yet soe, that following the example of Christe, of whom we may obserue, that he did more frequently pray, than reade, they do in no waies omit the exercise of



prayer, nor yet doe so giue themselves to study, as only to knowe howe they ought to speake: but to practise the things they haue leard & when they haue donne those things themselves, then afterwards to propose them vnto others to doe the like. For I would (said he) that my brethren should be disciples of the Gospell, & that soe they should profite in the knowledge of the truth, as that therewithall, they doe also increase in the purenesse of simpliciety: whereby they doe not separate from the prudence of the serpent, the simpliciety of the dove: which our chiefe maister hath with his owne blessed mouth, conioyned therevnto.

Being demaunded at *sienna*, by a certaine religiousse man, whose was Doctor of diuinity, concerning certaine questions which were very difficult & hard to be vnderstood: he did with such a clearnesse of doctrine, discover the secretts of Gods diuine wisdom, that the same learned man, was thereat greatly amazed, and with much admiration thereof, did say: Vndoubtedly the diuinity of this holy Father, is like as it were an Eagle, borne vp a loft with the wings of purity, and contemplation, but our knowledg, creepeth belowe, vpon the ground. For though he were but euen vnskillfull in the manner of speaking, yet was he so full of heavenly knowledg, that he explicated most doubtfull questions, and produced to light many hidden and secret things. Neither is it to be held for strange, that the holy man had from Almighty God receaued, the vnderstanding of the scriptures: seeing that by the perfect imitation of Christe, he did



did beare the truth of them, lively expressed in his workes: and that by the plentiful vñction of the Holy Ghoste, he had the teacher of them abiding with him in his harte.

And so singularly also did the spirite of prophecy appeare in him, that he did not only foresee future things, but did also see into the hidden secretts of mens harts: & did moreouer behold the things that were absent, as though they were present, in marveilouse manner exhibiring himself, present, vnto those that were absent. For at that time when that the army of the Christians did beseige the citry of *Damiata*, the seruāt of God chāced to be there: not armed with weapons, but with firmenesse of faith. Vpon the very day therfore, when the Christians were readie prepared to make the assault, the seruaunt of Christe, vnderstanding so much, did fetch a most deepe & hartie sigh; and therewithall said vnto his cōpanion: Our Lord hath shewen vnto me that if the battell be vndertaken, it shall not prosperously succcede vnto the Christians. But if I shall discover the same, I shal be reputed a foole: and if I shall conceale it, I shall not escape the grudge of myne owne conscience. What doe you therfore aduise to be donne in this case. Vnto whom his companion answered, saying. Brother let it be of no moment vnto you, to be censured by the mouths of men: for you doe not nowe beginne, to be reputed a foole. Discharge therfore your cōscience, & feare God more than mē. Vpon the hearing of which wordes, out stepped the prophette, applying to the Christians his behouf: I



admonitions: he did forbidde them the conflict, and denounced the euent. But the truth was taken for a fable, they hardened their harts & would not returne. See therefore? They did indeed encounter together, and ioyne in battell: but all the Christian forces were put to flight, and the army was beaten back with much dishonor, and without triumphe. And in such degree was the number of the Christians diminished, which the greatnesse of the slaughter, that about sixe thousand personnes were slaine and taken. Wherein it did euidently appeare that the wisdom of the poore man was not to be despised: considering that. *The soule of the iust man, shall sometimes discover the truth, more than seauen sentinells, sitting on high to keepe the watche.*

*Ecc. 37. 18.*

*Behold  
the custome  
of Chri-  
stians to  
prayer  
before they  
eate.*

Another time also after his returne from beyond the Seas, he came to preache at *Celanum*, and euen then a certaine souldier, did with great devotion, and much instance invite him to dinner. Whervnto the holy man assenting, did accordingly come vnto the souldiers house: all the whole familie, not a litle reioycinge the entrance of those poore guests. But before the company beganne to eate, the deuoute holy man *Saint Francis*, (according to his wonted manner) stoode offering his prayers and praises vnto God, with his eyes lifted vp to heauen. And when his prayer was donne, he familiarly called aside his curteous Hoste, and spake in this wise vnto him: Loe nowe brother Hoste, at the instancie of your earnest requests, I haue entred into your house, to eate with you. Wherefore agree nowe I pray you, vnto my coun-

cell



cell and aduise: for heare you shall not eate, but in another place. Confesse forthwith your sinnes, with the perfect contrition of true repentaunce: and let nothing remaine within you so secret, but that you discover it, with true and sincere Confession. Because our Lorde will this day rewarde you, for the great devotion, wherwith you haue receaved his poore servants. The soldier forthwith conformed himselfe vnto the holy mans aduise: and vnto one of his companions, discovering all his sinnes in humble Confession: he disposed of his house; and withall his best endeavours, prepared himselfe to die. But at the length they sate them downe at the Table: and when the rest beganne to eate, sodeinly the hoste himselfe gaue vp the Gost: being taken away with sodein death according to the worde of the man of God. And so it came to passe by the meritte of Hospitality, that the deuoute souldier *Receauing a Prophete*, did (according to the word of truth) *receiue the reward of a Prophete*: while he giving credit vnto the propheticall forewarning of the holy man, did provide himselfe against the sodeine assault of death, that being armed with the weapons of pennance, he might escape endlesse damnation; and might enter, into the eternall tabernacles.

One time when the holy men lay sicke at Reate a certaine Prebend named *Gedon*, a loose & worldly man, keeping his bedde vpon occasion of a fore and grievous infirmity; being brought nevertheless vnto him; did with teares, as well by himselfe as by the standers by, instantly requeste

K

him,

*If Sacramentall confession had not beene necessarie according to the precept of God and in vse amongst the ancient Fathers S. Francis had not commanded it to be performed of a man now ready to day.*



*S. Francis  
making  
the signe  
of the  
Crosse  
vpon a sick  
man he  
forthwith  
becometh  
whole.*

him with the signe of the holy Crosse. Vnto whom blessed Saint *Francis* in this wise replied: considering that your life hath hitherto binne, according to the desires of the flesh, without feare of Gods iustice and iudgments; how may I make the signe of the Crosse vpon you? But yet for the devout desires of your friends, I do signe you with the signe of the Crosse, in the name of our Lord. But know this for certaine, that if being delivered from this infirmity, you shall afterwarde returne, vnto your wonted evil life againe, you shall be sure to suffer, farre more grievous punishments: for in regarde of the sinne of ingratitude, the latter penalties are alwaies worse than the former. Thus therefore the signe of the Crosse being made vpon him, he who lay but even now contracted before them, did forthwith rise vp perfectly well recovered: and bursting forth into the praise of God, I am; saith he, even now delivered. And the very Chine bones of his back, did give a great sound in the hearing of all that were present: even as though a sorte of drie sticks had binne broken by hand. But within very small time after, this man, forgetfull of Gods benefits vnto him, gaue over his body vnto vnchaste delights. And when he was one evening at supper in a certaine Cannons house; and did there lodge for all that night, suddenly the roofe of the house fell downe vpon them all. But yet so that all the rest finding meane of escape from death, only this vnfortunate and wretched man, was in that fall intercepted and slaine. Thus therefore by the iust iudgement of  
God,



God, the last things of this man, became worse than the former, because of the vice of ingratitude, and for his contempt of God: whereas he ought to haue binne thankfull for the pardon he had already receaved, considering that a crime renewed, is a double offence.

Another time also, a certaine noble and very devout woman, came vnto this holy Saint, as wel to explicate vnto him her sorrowe and grieve, as also for the same to require a remedy. For she had a very cruel husband, who also was aduerse vnto her in the service of Christ. And therefore she requested the holy man to pray for him, that God of his clemency would vouchsafe to mollifie his hart. But he vnderstanding her case, gaue answere vnto her, saying, Go your way home in peace, & without doubt or dreade, expect forthwith to finde comfort at your husbands hands. And this more-over he adioyned, you shall say vnto him on the part of God and me, that now is the time of Clemency, and afterwards of equity. The woman having receaved his blessing, forthwith returned, and finding her husband, denounced those words vnto him. And, loe, the holy Ghost immediately did fall vpon him: who making him of the olde man, to become a new, did also worke in him, with mildenesse of hart in this manner of wise to make answere vnto her. Lady, let vs attend to the service of our Lord, and let vs indeavour our selues to saue our soules. So that at the perswasion of his holy wife, they both living together for many yeares a single life, did also both of them vpon one same

Heere we  
may see  
that euer  
Married  
people may  
by the  
grace of  
God liue  
chaste y  
we find  
many  
Saints to  
haue  
liued in  
this sorte



day, happily departe vnto our Lord. And wonderfull doubtlesse, was the efficacy of Propheti-  
call spiritte, which did abounde in this holy man  
of God, wherby he restored strength vnto wither-  
red members, and imprinted piety in stony hartes:  
albeit that no lesse wonderfull was the cleare  
perspicacity of the same spiritte, wherby he did  
in such wise foreknowe the finall event of things  
to come, that he did searche even into the secret  
thoughts of mens hartes, as another *Elizus* ha-  
ving obtained the double spiritte of *Elias*.

For having foretolde, vnto one of his familiar  
friends at *Sienna*, some certaine things which were  
finally to be fall vnto him; and being also in way  
of doubt demaunded, by that learned man, whom  
I haue already mentioned to haue had sometime  
conference with him, concerning the Scriptures  
whether he had foretold those thinges which he  
had heard by the relation of the man to whom he  
fortold them he not only affirmed himself to haue  
reported those words inded; but did also propheti-  
cally forwarne him of his owne end; that had cur-  
iously enquired of another mans. And to the end  
he might the more certainly imprinte the same  
in his minde, he did by no lesse wonderfull reve-  
lation, vnfolde, than by most wholsome Concell  
resolue, a certaine secrette scruple of his consci-  
ence, which he the foresaid learned man, had ne-  
ver discovered to any man aliue. For confirma-  
tion of all which things, it came to passe, that the  
same religious man, did so finally make his ende  
even as the servant of Christ had foretolde him.



At such time also, as he once returned from beyond the Seas, having then in company with him brother Leonard of *Assisum*, it chaunced that he being much wearied and overlaboured, did for some litle while ride vpon an Asse. But the brother following meane while a foote, and bringe himselfe also not a litle wearie, beganne, (out of some kinde of humane passion) to say thus within himselfe: His parents and minde plaied not at like games. But see, he rideth, and I, a foote-man, leade his Asse. And euen as he was then thinking the foresaid words, the holy man forthwith alighted from the Asse, and said vnto him; It is not meere brother that I should ride, and you goe a foote: because you haue binne more noble, and of greater power in the world than I, Heare vpon the brother being forthwith amazed, and blushing therat for shame, and also acknowledg-ing himselfe to be taken in a fault, did fal downe at the fette of the holy man, and with abundance of teares, manifested the naked truthe of his thought, & humbly craved pardon for the same.

A certaine brother very devout vnto God, and to his blessed seruant of Christe, did frequently reuolue this thought in his minde, that he, should be worthy of Gods good fauour, whom this holy man did embrace with a familiar and inward affection; and that he, whom he reputed as a straun-ger vnto him, should be by God reputed out of the number of his elect. And being therefore of-ten times troubled with the violence of this cogi-tation, he did very vehemently desire the familia-



rity of the man of God, but yet not having revealed vnto any man the secret of his heart; the lo-ving good Father called him & did sweetly speake in this manner, vnto him. My sonne let no cogitation trouble you; for accompring you as most deare among my beloved, I do willingly bestowe vpon you, the giste of my loue and familiaritie. The brother marveiling herevpon, and of one already very devout yet new becomming much more deuote, did not only increase in loue towards the holy man, but being endewed with the grace of the holy Ghost, was plentifully enriched with farre greater gifts.

But During the time that he once remained solitarie in his Cell, vpon the mounte of *Auerua*, one of his companions did exceedingly desire to haue some parcell of our Lord his words, briefly written with his hand. For he made accounte thereby to escape, or at least wile more easely to beare a very grievous tentation, not of the flesh, but of the spiritte, wherewith he was sorely troubled. And languishing with this desire, he was not a litle molested in minde, for that he durst not through shamesfastenelle, to open the matter vnto the reverent father. But to whome no man did declare it, the spiritte of God did vouchsafe to reveale it. For he willed the foresaid brother to bring him inck and paper: and according vnto his desire, he wrote therein with his owne hand the praises of our Lord, and last of all, concluded the same with his benediction, saieing vnto him, Take vnto you this litle peece of paper, and keep

the



the same diligently to the very day of your death. The brother gladly receyved this much desired gift and all the former tentation, forthwith departed. The writing also was carrefully reserved. And whereas afterwarde, marveilouse effects by it were wrought, it was a testimony of the vertues of holy Saint Francis.

There was a brother, who outwardly seemed to be of great holinesse, and of very excellent conversation: but was yet indeede very singular. For attending evermore vnto praiser, he did so exactly observe continuall silence, that he was accustomed to make his confession, not by wordes, but by signes. But it fortun'd one time that the holy Father, came vnto the place to see this brother, & to conferre with the rest of the brethren about him. At what time they all commending him, & magnifying him very much. The man of God, replied vpon them, Beware my brethren: doe not extoll vnto me, in him the Diuels counterfeiting. For know in very truth, that it is a diuelish tentation, and a fraudulent deceipt. The brethren did but hardly accept of this iudgement: as holding it impossible, that the false flourish of fraude and deceit, should colour themselves, with such notable signes of good perfection. But it was not many daies after, that he went out of religion, whereby it evidently appeared, with what an excellent clearnesse, & internall light, the man of God had beholden the secrets of his harte. And in like manner, with infallible truth foretelling, the ruine and fall of many that seemed to stand as al-



so the conversion of many to Christ, that were as yet perverse, he seemed to haue drawn nigh to the beholding of that mirrour: of eternal light; by the marveilouse brightnes wherof the sight of his minde, did behold things absent in body, from him as if they had binne verely present before him.

For vpon a time, his Vicar held a Chapter: but he in the meane while, remained aparte in his Cell at praier, as a mediator, betweene the brethren and God. And when one of them, vnder some cloake and pretext of defence, did not submit himselfe vnto discipline, the holy man, even then, beholding the same in spirite: called one of the brethren and saied vnto him, Brother, I haue seene the Diuell sitting vppon the backe of that disobedient brother, & him, straitly to hold his neck: who being spurred on wardes by such a rider, and contemning the raines of obedience, did follow the sway, of his owne violent motion. And when I did pray vnto God; for the brother, suddenly the Diuell, with shame, departed. Goe therefore, and say vnto him, that he doe forthwith submit his neck vnto the yoke of holy obedience. He therefore being by the Messenger admonished, and presently converted vnto God, did humbly prostrate himselfe, at the Vicars fete.

Another time also it chaunced that two of the brethren came from a farre of to the Ermitage of *Grecinum* to see the man of God, and to returne with his benediction, which they had now long time desired. But comming thither, and not finding him, because he was then returned from publique



blique place to be solitary in his Cell: they departed away, peniur and desolate. And see, even as they were in going, the holy man, whereas according to humane vnderstanding, he coulde haue no knowledg either of their going or coming, yet neverthelesse contrary to his vusual manner, came out of his Cell, and calling aloude after them, according to their desire, did blesse them with the signe of the Crosse in the name of Christ.

Ther came two brethre vpon a time from the lād of labour: wherof the auncienter brother gaue soundry scandals vnto the yonger. But when the were both come to the Father, he asked of the yonger, how the brother his companion had behaved himselfe towards him in the way. Who answering surely, well enough. The Father replied. Beware brother, least vnder the pretence of humility, you make a lie: for I know, I know, but marke a while, and you shall see. The brother marveiled very much, how he, by force of the spiritte, could haue knowledg of things that were donne so farre from him. But within fewe daies after, that other brother, who had given the scandall vnto him, not having asked pardon of the Father, nor yet having receaved due discipline for the same, seting nought by his Order, did forsake his covent. In whose fall and ruine, two things are at once to be considered: namely the yprightnesse of Gods divine iustice, and the singuler perspicuity of his prophetical spiritte. But in what manner of wise: by force of Gods mighty power he did exhibite himselfe present vnto them



that were absent from him, it is evidently to be  
 seene out of the things before recited: it be well  
 recalled to minde, how he being absent from the  
 brethren, neverthelesse appeare vnto them, trans-  
 figured in a fiery Chariotte; and how also he pre-  
 sented himself vnto them, in the forme of a Crosse  
 at the Chapter of Alres. The which we ought to  
 belieue to be donne by Gods heavenly disposicion  
 that by the marveilouse apparition, of his bodily  
 presence it might manifestly appeare, how present  
 and ready at hand his spiritte was vnto the light  
 of externall wisedome, *which is more moveable then*  
*Sap 7. 24.* *all moveable things, and reaching every where, by her*  
*o vne puritie, doth transfuse herself through nations into*  
*Mat. 11. 25* *holy soules, and ordaineth the friends and prophetis of God.*  
*Psal 70. 16* For the most high and superexcellent Doctor, is  
*Mat 16. 17* accustomed to discover his hidden misteries vnto  
 simple persons and litle ones: according as first it  
 appeared in *David*, that singuler Prophet, and  
 afterwards, in the prince of the Apostles, *S. Peter*,  
 and now at length, in the poore litle one of Christ  
 Saint *Francis*. For these whereas they were but  
 simple according to the course of humane lear-  
 ning, whereby the instruction of the holy Ghoste,  
 made right excellēt & renowned, The one, a Shep-  
 heard: to feede the flock, of the Synagogue, ledde  
 out of Egypt: The other a Fisher, to replenish the  
 net of the Church, with the manifold numbers of  
 believers: And this last a Marchant adventurer, to  
 buy the pearle of Evangelicall life, with the sale  
 and distribution, of all that he had; for the loue  
 of Christ.



## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

*Of the efficacy of his preaching: and of his  
giste in Curing.*

**T**H a right loyall seruante, and faithfull mi-  
nister of Christe, Saint Francis, to the end he  
might both faithfully and perfectly, accomplish  
all the things committed vnto him, did most espe-  
cially addict himself, vnto thole exercises of vertue  
which by revelation of the holy spiritte, he knewe  
to be most pleasing to his beloved Lorde. Vpon  
occasion whereof, it chaunced him to fall, into a  
greate agonie of a certaine kind of doubtfulnesse:  
which for many daies together, at his returne from  
prayer, he did purpose vnto his familiar brethrene,  
to be by them determined. What counsell, said he,  
doe ye giue vnto me my brethrene? What doe ye  
commende vnto me? Whither that I should attend  
vnto prayer, or trauel abroad to preache. For I, little  
one that I am beinge simple and rude of speache,  
haue receaued at Gods hands a greater grace, in  
praying, than in speaking. There seemeth also, in  
prayer to be a gaine, and heaping vp of graces, but  
in preaching, a certaine kind of distribution of the  
gifts from heauen receaued: in prayer, a gaine, ap-  
peareth to be a purifying of the inward affections  
and an vniting of them, vnto the one, true & chie-  
fest good, together with a strengthening of vertue  
but in preaching a bedusting of the spiritual feete,  
a distraction about many things, and a slackening



In prayer breifly, we speake vnto God, and therein also we heare him, and leading as it were an Angelicall life, we doe conuerse among Angells: whereas in preaching, we must condescend in many things vnto men, and liuing according vnto humane custome among them, we must thinke vpon humane things, we must see them, speake of them, & heare them. But one thing is yet to be saied, on the contrarie parte, which seemeth to ouerballance all thesethings, before the face of God: namely that the only begotten sonne of God, who is the very height of wisdom it self, did come downe from his Fathers bolome, for the salvation of soules, that instructing the world, by his owne example, he might preache the worde of salvation, vnto men whom he was to redeeme, with the price, to cleanse, with the lauer, and to sustaine, with the Cup, of his most holy and sacred blood, not reseruing any thing vnto himselfe, which he did not liberally bestowe for our salvation. And considering that we ought to doe all things, according to the patterne of those things which we see in him, as it were vpon a hight and loftie hill: it seemeth more pleasing to God, that intermitting the course of rest, I should goe forth vnto labour. And hauing in this manner, conferred with his brethrene for many daies together, he could not certainly discern, whether of these courses, was rather to be taken, as being indeed, more truly acceptable vnto Christe. For though, by the spiritte of prophesie, he did knowe wonderfull things, yet of himselfe, he was not able clearely to resolve this question.



tion; the singular providence of God in this manner of wise, disposing, that both the merite of preaching, should be manifested, by an Oracle, from above, and that the humility of the servante of christ, should also be preserved. This true Minor who had learnt great things of the most excellent Maister, was not ashamed to aske litle things, of them that were indeed, lesser than himself. For he was alwaies accustomed with especiall diligence to enquire, by what way and by what manner of meane, he might more perfectly serve God, according vnto his good will and pleasure. This was his chiefest philosophy, this was his chiefest desire, so long as he lived: to learne of the wise, and of the simple, of the perfect and of the vnperfect, of litle ones, and of aged persons, how he might be able, more efficaciously to aspire, vnto the very topp of perfection.

Calling therefore vnto him, two of his brethren he sent them to brother *Silvester*, who had before time seene the Crosse issuing forth of his mouth, & did even now, continually attend vnto prayer, vpon the hill about *Assisium*: requiring him to seeke Gods diuine answere concerning this doubt, and accordingly to send word, vnto him. In like manner also, he gave in charge, to the holy virgin *S. Clare*, that by someone of the purest and simplest virgins lying vnder her discipline, she herself also praying with the rest of her Sisters, should vpon this point, desire to knowe the will of our Lord. And marveilously doubtesse, by the revelation of Gods heavenly spirite, did this venerable Priest,



and the consecrated virgin, agree in one: namely that it was the blessed will and pleasure of God, that the messenger of Christe should goe forth, to preache. And so accordingly, the holy man, having, at the returne of the brethren, by them received the will of our Lord, in such wise as had binne related vnto them, did forth with, addresse himself, and without any manner of delay, did undertake his iorney. But with so great a fervour they went, to accomplishe Gods diuine commandement, yea and so speedily did he runne along, as if (the hand of our Lorde beinge newly made vpon him) he had euen then put on a newe vertue from heaven.

And as he did in this sorte drawe nigh to *Beniamin*, he came vnto a certaine place, wherein was assembled, an exceeding greate multitude of birdes. of diuers sorts. Which, when the holy man of God had espied, he ranne chearefully vnto the place, and did also salute them, as if they had binne partakers of reason. But as they stood all expecting, and turning themselves vnto him, so that those which were euen in the low shrubes, bowing downe their heads, as he approached vnto them, did after an vnwonted manner looke and gaze vpon him, he came euen very close, vnto them: and seriously admonished them all, to heare the worde of God. Saying, yea birdes, my brethren, you are much bounde to praise your creator, whoe hath clothed you with feathers, & hath given you wings to flie, who hath graunted vnto you the purity of the aire, and doth governe you  
without



without your owne care and trouble. And when he had spoken to this and the like effect, the litle birdes, after a marveilouse manner, reioyeing, beganne to stretch out their neckes, to spread abroad ther wings, to open their bills, and to looke attentively vpon him. But he passing through the middest of them, with a wonderfull fervour of spiritte, although he touched them with his coate, yet did not one of them all stirre forth of the place vntill such time as the man of God hauing made the signe of the Crosse vpon them, and giuen them leaue to departe with his benediction also receiued, they all flewe away together. All these things were seene of his companions, that staid for him in the way. Vnto whom the pure and simple man returning, beganne (for that he had not before this time, preached vnto the birdes) to reprove himself, of an oversight, and negligence.

And afterwards as he went along, preaching in the places, adioyning he came to a certaine towne called *Aluianum*: where hauing gathered the people together, and silence being also entoynd he could yet scanty be heard, by reason of a nūber of swallows then building their nests, and making a marveilouse chattering noyle, in the place. Vnto them therefore, the man of God spake, in the hearing of them all: Saying, yea swallows my sisters, it is nowe time, that I also doe speake: for that you haue spoken enough already. Harken nowe therefore vnto the worde of God, and keepe silence, vntill the same be ended. But they as though they had binne capable of vnderstanding, did sodeinly



cease their noise; and moved not out of the place, vntill the whole Sermon was at an end. wher vpon all that were present, and did beholde the same, being filled with wonder and admiration, did glorifie God therein. The fame of this miracle, being spreade abroad on every side, did kinde in many the deuotion of faith; and a reverence also, to this holy Saint.

For in the Cittie of P A R I S, a certaine scholer of good towardlinesse, attending diligently vnto study, among other his companions, & being molested with the tedious and vnseasonable noise of a certaine swallowe, beganne to say vnto those his companions; This swallowe, doubtlesse is one of them, which troubled holy *Francis* the man of God, one time, in his Sermon, vntill he had put them to silence. And turning himself to the swallowe; he confidently said, vnto her, in the name of *Francis*, the seruante of God, I commaunde thee, that presently thou come vnto me, and hold thy peace. But shee so soone as she heard the name of Saint *Francis*, being as it were instructed, by the precepts of the man of God, did both incontinently, cease her noyse, and did also, readily committe her selfe vnto his hande, as to a sure and safe custodie. Whereat the scholler, being muche astonished, restored her forth with to libertie, and heard no more of her chattering.

Another time also, when the seruante of God preached at *Caserta*; vpon the sea shore, and the people thronged vpon him for very deuotion to touche him; the seruante of Christe, loathing so great



great applause of the people, leaped himself aboard  
into a litle sheepe, that was nigh to the shore side.  
But the shippe, as if it had binne some reasonable  
creature, and had binne with an inward director;  
did without the help of any guide or Mariner, in  
the sight of them all, and to the greate admira-  
tion of every one: withdraw it selfe, a prety way  
from the land. And being now launched out (as  
it were) some reasonable space, into the dept  
of the sea, there stood the shippe vnmoueable  
amiddest the waues, meanwhile that the holy  
man, preached vnto the people that stood expe-  
cting vpon the shore. But the Sermon being en-  
ded, when the multitude, that had seene this Mi-  
racle, was with his benediction departed, that  
they might now, no further molest him, the ship  
of it selfe, returned back to the land. Who is there  
therefore, of so obstinate and impious a minde,  
as to contemne the preaching, of holy Saint *Francis*:  
by whose wonderfull vertue, it came to passe  
that not only creatures vnreasonable, should fro  
him receaue instruction, but also, that bodies  
devoid of life, should serue him in his preaching  
as though they had bin with life endewed.

And evermore doubtlesse, was present with  
this his seruant Saint *Francis*, in all his enterprises,  
he who had annointed, and sent him, the spirit  
of our Lord, and the very power, and wisdom  
of God Christ himselfe: to the ende he might o-  
verflowe, with wordes of wholesome doctrine  
and might illustriously shine, with miracles of  
mighty power. For his speech was as a burning



*This is the  
best man-  
ner of lear-  
ning when  
a man doth  
not only  
exhor-  
te  
therwith  
words but  
also with  
example.*

penetrating the most secrette parts of the hart, & filling the mindes of all men, with admiration: in that they pretended no florish, of humane invention, but sweetely savoured of the odoriferouse blasts, of divine revelation. For being one time to preach before the Pope, and his Cardinalls, by the procurement of the Lord Cardinall of *Hosia* and having then comitted to memory, a certaine sermon by himself studiously composed; see whe as he stoode, in the presence of that assembly, to propose vnto them the wordes of edification, he had so cleane forgotten, the whole; that he was not able to vtter, any word at all. But having discovered the same, by humble acknowledgement of the truth: and so betaken himself to invoke the grace of the holy Ghost, he beganne suddenly to abounde with so effectuell words, and with so powerful a force, to moue the minds of those great men, to compunction, that it was manifestly to be discerned, that not he himself, but the spirit of our Lord, did speake within him. And for as much as, he had in real action, alredy perswaded himself vn to that, whervnto in words, he perswaded others he therefore, without feare of any reproover, did confidently preach the truth. For he had no skilmerly to touche the faults of any, but to searche them even downe to the bottome: nor yet coude he smothe vp the liues of sinners, but strike them home, with a sharpe rebuke. And with the same Constancy of minde, he spake vnto greate personages, and others of lesse accounte: as also with like alacrity and ioye of spirite, he did spake vnto



vnto many, and vnto few. Every age, and every sex, made hast to heare, and see, this new man, given from heauen, vnto the world. But he himselfe, going through diuers Countries, did preach with great fervour and zeale: *Our Lord working withall, and confirming the worde with signes that followed.* For in the force of his name, this preacher of the truth Saint Francis, did cast out Diuels, did heale the sicke, and which is more, did by the efficacy of his speache, mollifie the mindes of the obstinate, vnto pennance, as also he restored health, both to their soules, and bodies, as some of his workes, do well approue, which shall be for example sake, now presently, specified.

In the Citty of *Tuscanella*, being devoutly intertained of a certaine souldier, and by him earnestly requested to heale his sonne, who had ben contracted in his members ever from his nativity, he lifting him vp by the hande, did sodeinely, so restore him to health againe, that in the sight of all men: all the parts of his body. were forthwith made sounde, and the youth himselfe being now perfectly whole and strong, presently rose vp, walking, leaping and praising God.

So also in the Citty of *Narnium*, at the instancy of the Bishoppe, making the signe of the Crosse, from the heade to the foote, vpon one that being sicke of the palsey, was destitute of the vse of all his members, he thereby restored him to perfect health.

In the Bishoppricke of *Reate*, a certaine boy, who had binne so marveilously swollen in his bo-

Marke. 16.

20.

S. Franc is  
with the  
signe of the  
Crosse re-  
storeth one  
sicke of the  
paulsey  
to his for-  
mer health.



dy, ever since he was but fower years of age, that by no meanes he could see his owne thighs, being by his Mother, with teares presented vnto the holy man, so soone as he had touched him with his handes, was presently whole and well.

With the  
same signe  
he doth  
all soe  
help a boy.

At the Cittie of *Orta*, there was another boy whose body was so drawn together in a compasse, that he bare his heade with his feete, besides that sundry of his bones were also broken: but being at the lamentable praier of his parents, by him, signed with the signe of the Crosse, he was sodeinly stretched out to length, and forthwith wholly delivered.

With the  
signe of the  
Crosse also  
he healeth  
a woman  
which had  
her hand  
withered.

A certaine woman of *Eugubium*, having both her hands so shrunk together and withered, that with them shee could doe no manner of worke, by his making the signe of the Crosse vpon her, in our Lord his name, was presently brought to soe perfect vse of them, that returning home by and by, shee like another *Saint Peters*, mother in law, did with her owne hands prepare victualles, to Minister vnto him, and his poore brethren.

With the  
same sign  
he also  
restored  
sight to  
the blind.

He also restored sight, vnto a certaine blinde girle, in the Castle of *Mevanium*; by annointing her eies thrice with his owne spittle, in the name of the Trinity,

Likewise a certaine woman of the Cittie of *Narnium*, being stricken with blindnesse, receaving from him the signe of the Crosse, recovered thereby her desired sight.

Againe at *Bononia*, there was a boy, whose having one of his eies so blenished, that he could  
neither



neither see any thing therewith, nor yet could be holpen by any remedy: yet when the servant of our Lorde had made vpon him, the signe of the Crosse from the heade to the foote, did thereby recover, so cleare a sight; that entring afterwards into the Order: of the Friers Minors: he affirmed himselfe, to see more clearely of the eye, that had bine before blemished: than of the other, which was alwaies, sounde.

In the towne of Saint *Geminianus* the seruant of God, being entertained, of a certain deuoute man, whose wife was vexed with a Divell, after praier first made; commaunded the Divell in the vertue of obedience to departe: and by the power of God did so sodeinly chace him away, that thereby it did manifestly appeare; that against the forcible power of holy obedience, the very perversenesse of the Divells, could not make resistance.

*He expelleth away the Divell with a praier.*

In the Cittie of *Castellum*, a raging and wicked spiritte, obsessing a certaine woman having, from the holy man, receaved the commaundement of obedience: departed with great fury and indignation; leaving the woman, that was before, obsessed: nowe holy free, both in minde, and bodie.

One also of the bretheren, was afflicted with such an horrible infirmity, that it was by many affirmed, rather to be some vexation of the divel, than any naturall kinde of disease. For oftentimes he was cast vppon the grounde, and there tumbled vp and downe, foming at the mouthe:



having the members of his body, sometimes contracted, sometimes drawn out at length: sometimes folded together, sometimes writhed awrie, sometimes made stiffe and hardened. And sundrie tymes, being stretchred out along, vntil he weare stiffe: and having also his feete equall with his head: he was lifted vp alofte, with inevitable daunger in horrible manner, presently to fall downe, to the ground againe. Vpon whom thus miserably and incureably diseased, the servant of Christ, who was full of pittie, taking especiall commiseration sent vnto him, a morsell of the bread, whereof himselfe did eate. But the taste of that bread, was of soe effectualle strength vnto that distressed man; that from thence forward, he felt no more trouble of that disease.

In the County of *Aretium* a certaine, woman having binne for many daies togeather, in labour of childbirthe: so that shee was even now in manner deade, and wholly despairing of all other remedie, saue only of God, and the servant of Christ euen then passing through those partes on horsebacke, by reason of some infirmity, in his body, it chaunced that the horse was brought back againe, through the same village, where this miserable woman was in such pittiful wise tormented. But the men of that place, seeing the horse whervpon the holy man had sitten, pulled of the bridle, to lay it vppon the woman. At the marveilouse touche whereof, the woman without all daunger broughte forth here childe with saferie.



A certaine man of *Castrum plebis*, one that was very religiouse and feared God, had with him a Corde, wherewith the holy Father had binne girded. And when a great number both of men and women inhabiting in that place, was troubled, with divers infirmities, he went through the houses, of them that were sicke, and dipping the Corde into water, did giue vnto the sicke folkes therof to drinke. And so by this meanes, many persons, were recovered. As also, in like manner, many diseased persons, tasting of the loaves of bread, which the holy man, had touched; did by the operation, of Gods divine power, speedily obtaine the recovery of their health. Considering that with these, & many other prodigiouse miracles, the messenger of Christ, was in his preaching, enobled: men gaue heedefull attention vnto his words, as if the very Angel of our Lord, had spoken. For whereas there excelled in him, he prerogative of vertues, the spiritte of prophecy, the efficacy of miracles, the Oracle of his preaching, given from heauen, the obedience of creatures, deuoide of reason: the vehement alteration of mens harts, at the hearing of his wordes, the instruction, which he had from the holy-Ghoste aboue humane learning, the authority of preaching, graunted vnto uim by the Pope, not without divine revelation: and furthermore the confirmation of his Rule (by the same Vicar of Christ) wherein the forme of his preaching is expressed, as also the signes of the most high King, in manner of a seale imprinted in his body, all these



things, as tenne singular testimonies, doe vndoubtedly manifest, vnto the whole world: that the Preacher of Christ, Saint *Francis*; was both venerable in office, and autentically in doctrine, as also admirable in holinesse: and did therefore as the messenger of God indeed: preache the Gospel of Christ.

### THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

*Of his holy stigmattes.*

*Genes. 28.*  
12.

**T**HIS Angelicall man Saint *Francis*, was neuer accustomed to be idle, from doing good but rather like to the heavenly spirits, in *Jacobs* ladder, he did, either ascend, vnto God, or descend vnto his neighbour. For, the time which was graunted vnto him, for his meritt, he had learnt, so prudently to deuide, that some parte, he did with great labour bestowe vpon the commoditie of his neighbour: & the rest, he did dedicate, to the quiet abundance of contemplation. And therefore, when, according to the necessitie of place and time he had condescended to procure the salvation, of other men, withdrawing himselfe, from the disquiernesse, of the multitudes; he betooke himself, to some secrete parte, of the wildernesse, & place of rest; that, attending there more freely, vnto the service of God; if any dust had cleaved vnto him, by meane of humane conversation, he might so shake it of againe. Two yeares, therefore, before he rendred vp his soule, to heauen; he was by direction



rection of Gods divine, providence, after many labours, broughte, into a highe place aparte, which is called the Mounte of *Aluerna*. And whiles he did in that place, according to his wonted manner, beginne to fast the lent, which he obserued in honor of *S. Michael* the Archangell, enioicing then, the sweetnesse of divine contemplation, more abundantly, than he had binne a foretime, accustomed, and being set on fire, with a more burning flame, of heauenly desires, he beganne, yet in a more abundant measure, to feele the good guists of God sent downe from heauen vpon him. And he verely was indeed carried vp aloft, howbeit not as a curious searcher, of the Maiesty of God, soe to be oppressed with his glory: but as a faithfull and prudent seruaunte, seeking out the good pleasure of God, where vnto, he did most earnestly desire, by all manner of meanes, to conforme himselfe. And therefore it was, by the Oracle of God inspired into his minde, that in the opening of the booke of the Ghospell, Christ would vouchsafe, to reueale, vnto him, what should be most acceptable vnto God, in him, and concerning him. Having therefore, formerly be taken himselfe to prayer, with much devotion, he caused, the booke of the holy Ghospells, to be taken of from the Aultar, and the same, in the name of the holy Trinitie, to be opened by his companion, who also was a man of great devotion and holinesse. And considering that notwithstanding the same booke, was three times opened, yet did he alwaies light vpon the Passion of our Lorde, he therefore being ful of Gods holy spiritte



did well vnderstand, that as he had imitated Christ in the actions of his life, so ought he before his departure out of this world, to be conformable vnto him, in the afflictions and dolours of his Passion. And albeit that by reason of the continuall austeritie, of his life formerly past, and of his continuall bearing our Lorde his Crosse, he was now but weake of bodie, yet was he nothing terrified therewithall: but was more forcibly animated, to the sustaining of martirdome. For the insuperable burning loue of good Iesus, had encreased within him, to lampes of fire and flames: soe that many waters were not able to quenche his soe prevalent Charitie.

Being therefore with the Seraphicall fervour of desires borne vp alofte into God, and by the sweetnesse of compassion, transformed into him, who of his surpassing charitie, would vouchsafe to be crucified; one morning about the Feast of the Exaltation of the holy Crosse, while he did pray vpon the side of the hill, he sawe a Seraphin, with six wings all fierie and full of gloriouse light, descending downe from the toppe of the heauens. And as he came with a swifte flighte, to that place of the aire which was neare to the man of God, there appeared betweene his wings, the forme of a man crucified, hauing his handes and feete stretcht out, in manner of a Crosse, and fastened also, vnto a Crosse. Two of his wings were lifted vp, aboue his heade, two were streeched forth, to flie; and two, did couer, his whole body. At the beholding whereof he was exceedingly amazed: and there entred

his



his harte, a ioy, mingled with sorrowe. For he reioyced in that gracious aspect, whereby he perceaued himselfe to be beholden of Christ, vnder the forme of a Seraphim: but, the fastening to the Crosse, did peirce through his soule, with a sworde of compassionate greife. He marveilously wondred in the aspect of soe strange & rare a vision: knowing well that the infirmitie of Passion, could by no meanes agree, with the immortalitie of a Seraphicall spirite. But in the end he herehence perceaued, our Lord reuealing the same vnto him, that therefore this manner of vision, was by the providence of God, in suche manner of wise, presented vnto his veiwe, that he the friend of Christ might thereby forknow, that he was wholly to be transformed, into the likenesse of Christ crucified, not by the martirdome of his flesh, but by the burning inflammation of his minde.

The vision therefore, disappearing, did leaue behinde, a wonderfull heate, in his harte: and a no lesse wonderfull impression of signes, in his flesh. For presently there beganne to appeare in his hands and feete, the signes of nailes, euen in such manner as a litle before he had seene them, in the likenesse of the crucified man. For his hands and feete seemed to be in the very midst, peirced with nailes: the heades of them nailes appearing, in the inner parte of his handes, and the outer parte of his feete but the pointes of them, on the contrary sides. And the heades of the nailes, in his hands & feete, were rounde and blacke: but the pointes were somewhat long and wreathed, and as it were clinched:



which rising vppc, out of the very flesh, did sticke out higher than the rest of the flesh. His righte side also, as being pearced through with a speare, was couered ouer with a redde skarre: which oftentimes, casting out holy bloud: did besprinkle, his coate and breeches therewithall.

But the seruante of Christ perceauing that those markes so plainly imprinted in his flesh could not to be hidden from his familiar companions; and fearing neverthelesse, to publishe the secrette of our Lord, was in a greate agony and doubt of minde, whether he should vtter or conceale the vision which had binne shewed vnto him. Wherefore he called together some of the brethren, & speaking vnto them in generall termes, he proposed his doubt before them, and required their counsel and advise therein. At what time one of the brethren: *illuminatus* by name, a man also singularly illuminated by grace from heauen, perceiuing that he had seene some wonderfull things, by reason that he seemed to be very greatly astonished, did speake in this wise vnto the holy man: Brother, knowe it for certaine that it is not only for your selfe, but also for others, that the diuine mysteries of God, are sometime shewen vnto you. Wherefore you haue iust cause to feare, least if you shall conceale the thing which you haue receaved for the profite and behoofe of many, you be therevpon adiudged reprehensible for the hidden Talent. At whose wordes, the holy man, being greatly moved; albeit that at other times he was wont to say; *My secrette vnto my selfe*; did yet now at this time

with

Mat. 25.  
26.

Esay. 24.  
16.



with much feare relate the historie of the foresaied vision: adding also therevnto that he who had appeared vnto him, had told him some things which he would neuer open vnto any man, so long as he should liue. And we may very wel beleue that the wordes of that holy *seraphin*, soe admirably appearing in the Crosse, were soe mysticall and secrette, that haply it was not lawfull to vtter them vnto men.

And nowe after that the true loue of Christ, had transformed this his lover into the same Image with himself; having accomplished his forty daies fast in the desert according to his determination; and the solemne feast of *S. Michael* the Archangell being nowe approached; the Angelical man *S. Francis* came downe from the mountaine, bearing with him the forme of the crucified; howbeit not figured, in tables either of wood or stone, by the hand of the Craftesman; but expressed in his fleshly members, by the finger of the living God. And because, *It is good to hide the secrette of the King*: this holy man therefore being privie of the Kings secrette Councell, did apply all his best endeauour, to hide those sacred marks. But because it is the worke of God, for his owne glories sake, to manifest the things which he doth, our Lord therefore himself, who had secrettely imprinted the marks, did openly shewe certaine miracles by meane of them: that the hidden and marveilouse force of those stigmats might manifestly appeare, by the evident testimony of signes and wonders.

*Tob. 12. 7.*

For in the Prouince of *Reate*, there raigned a very



greivous plague; which did soe cruelly consume all the sheepe and Oxen, that no manner of remedie could be applied vnto them. But behold, a certaine devout man that feared God, was by vision in the night time admonished, hastily to goe vnto the Ermitage of the brethren: and that taking the water, wherein the servaunte of God Saint *Francis* (who then remained in that place) had washed his hands and feete; he should sprinckle the same vpon all the beasts. Rising therefore early in the morning, he came to the place: & having priuely obtained this water by meane of the companions of the holy man, he sprinckled the sicke sheepe and Oxen, therewithall. Nowe see the wonder. As soone as the sprinckling had in any small quantitie once touched the beasts, that lay before languishing vpon the ground, they presently rose vp, as hauing nowe perfectly recouered their wonted strength: and hastily went, vnto their feede and pasture: as thought they had felt no harme at all. Whereby it came to passe, that by the admirable vertue of that water, which had but touched those sacred woundes, all manner of plague, did vtterly cease, & the pestilent disease, was driven quite away, from the flocks.

About the foresaid mountaine of *Aluerna*, before such time as the holy man, did make his abode in that place, by reason of a cloude, that rose out of the very mountaine, it selfe: a violent tempest of haile, did customably destroy the fruits of the earth; but after that happy apparition, not without the great wonder of all the inhabitants, the haile did cease. So that by the very face of hea-



uch, nowe marveilously cleared contrarie to com-  
mon custome, both the excellency, of that heauen-  
ly vision, and the efficacie of the stigmats, in that  
place imprinted, was sufficiently testified and de-  
clared.

It chaunced also once, in the winter time, that  
being, in regard of the weakenesse of his owne bo-  
dy, and of the asperousnesse also of the waies, car-  
ried vpon a certaine poore mans Ass, he was infor-  
ced to lodge all night vnder the edge of a certaine  
out bending rocke: whereby he might in some  
sorte, avoied the inconveniences of the snowe and  
night which came in such manner of wise vpon  
him, that he could not reache to the place appoin-  
ted for his lodging. But the holy man in the meane  
while perceaving, that the other poore man did  
murmure & (as it were) complaine, by his groanes,  
& tossing himselfe on either side, as one who  
having but smal & slender couering, could scarce-  
ly take any rest for the extreame bitternesse of  
the cold: and being enkindled with the fervour of  
divine loue, did streech out his hand and touche  
the man. Marveilouse doubtlesse was the effect  
thereof. For presently at the touche of that holy  
hande, which bare in it selfe the burning heate of  
the Seraphicall stone, all manner of cold, being  
quite expelled, there came such an heate vpon the  
poore man, both inwardly & with out, as if a flame  
of fire, from within a furnace, had breathed out  
vpon him. For presently being comforted both in  
minde and in body, he slept more sweetely among  
the stones and the snowe, vntill the morning, than



euere he had rested in his owne bed: as he himselfe afterwards did affirme. Wherefore it is manifest by most certaine tokens, that thole holy signes were imprinted by his vertue and power, whoe by a Seraphicall operation, doth purge, illuminate, and inflame, seeing that these signes did both purge from the plague, and with wonderfull efficacie conferre healtne, clearenesse, and heate vpon bodies; as also after his death it was demōstrated by most evident miracles, which heereafter we will set downe in their due place.

And though he endeauoured withall his diligence, to hide the treasure which he had found in the feilde; yet could it not be soe concealed, but that some did perceauē and see, the holy marks of his hands and feete: notwithstanding that he did (in manner continually) carry his handes covered, and did also, from that time forward, weare shoes vpon his feete. For they were seene euen in his life time, by sundrie of his brethren: whoe albeit that for their singuler holinesse, they were in all respects very worthy to be believed; yet vtterly to remoue all scruple and doubt, laicing their handes vpon the holy Ghospels, they did by solemne oathe avowe, that soe it was, and that they themselues had seene them. Some of the Cardinalls also, by reason of the familiaritie which they had with the holy man, did in like manner see those sacred stigmats: the praises whereof they haue truly inserted into Proases Himnes, and Anthemes which they haue ser forth in his honor: whoe as wel by worde, as by writing; haue given testimony vnto the truth.



truth. The chiefe Pastor also himself. Pope *Alexander*, preaching once vnto the people before many of the brethren, my seife also being then present; did affirme that he had with his owne eyes seene those holy stigmars, while the Sainte was yet aliue. And at the time of his death, they were seene and beheld, by more than fiftie of the brethren; by the most devout Virgin *S. Clare*, together with the rest of her sisters; and by secular parsons not to be numbred. Amongst whom, many (as shal be shewed in place convenient) haue both kissed them, for devotion, and haue touched them with their handes, for confirmation of their testimony.

But the wounde of his side, he covered with so greate carefulnesse that whilst he liued, no man could come, but by stealth, to see it. For one of the brethren, whose was wont diligently to minister vnto him, hauing out of a Godly kinde of care, ypon a time perswaded him to put of his coate, to the end it might be made cleane, watching heedfully with his eye, did see the wounde: wherevnto also speedily applieng three of his fingers, he did as well by sighte as by feeling, discern the quantity thereof. And by the like manner of heedfulnesse did that brother also see it, whose was at that time his Vicar. But the brother that was his companion a man verely of marvellouse simplicitie, meane while that he touched his shoulders, which were faine and weake, by reason of some infirmity, putting his hand by his hood, and letting it by chance to fall vpon the wounde, did put him to greate paine thereby. Wherefore after that time, he had



his breeches to make, that they reached vp to his arme pitts, to cover the wound of his side. But the brethren who, for the time being, did wash the breeches, or had his coate to make cleane, because they founde the same to be made red with blood, did vndoubtedly, by that evident signe, come to the knowledg of that sacred wounde: which afterwards when he was dead, they with many others besides, did in open viewe behold and reuerence.

Nowe therefore thou most hardy warriour of Christ, beare thou the weapons, of thy most invincible Captaine: where with being defended & adorned, thou shalt overcome all thine aduersaries. Beare thou the standard of the highest King: at the sight whereof, all the souldiers of the Armie of God, may be encouraged. Beare thou also the seale of the chiefe Bishoppe, Christ himselfe: whereby thy wordes and deedes, may worthely be of all men accepted, as irriprehensible, and full of authoritie. For nowe, because of the Stigmats of our Lord Iesus, which thou bearest in thy body, no man ought to be molestfull vnto thee: but rather everie servaunte of Christ, is bounde to be devout towards thee withal affection. Now by these most evident signes, approved not vnto two or three wittnesses, for sufficiency; but vnto very many, for superabundance; the testimonies of God, being in thee, & by thee, made so much to be beleived, doe take away from Infidells, all vaile and colour of excuse: meane while that by them, the believers are in faith established: by the confidence of hope borne vp alofte, and with the fier of Charitie, inflamed,

Galat. 6.  
17.



flamed. Nowe is in thee truly accomplished, the first vision which thou diddest see: namely, that being to be a Captaine generall, in the warfare of Christ; thou oughtest (as with signes of thine office) to be adorned with heavenly weapons, & with the signe of the Crosse. Nowe the vision of the Crucifixe, which thou diddest see in the beginning of thy conversion, striking thee through the hart, with the sworde of compassionate griefe; & the hearing also of the voice from the Crosse, proceeding as it were from the high Throane, and secrette Propitiatorie of Christ (according as thou hast affirmed by thy sacred speech) are vndoubtedly believed, to haue binne most true and certaine. Nowe is it verely believed and avowed, that the Crosse which (in the progresse of thy conversion) Brother *Silvester* did see, in marvellouse manner proceeding out of thy mouth; & that the swordes, striking through thy bowells, in the forme of a Crosse, which holy *Pacificus* did see: and that thy being lifted vp into the aire, in the manner also of a Crosse, when blessed *Anthony* did preach of the title of the Crosse, according as was shewen, to the Angelicall man *Monaldus*, were not things of fantastickall vision, but of heavenly revelation. And nowe towards the end, whereas at once is shewen vnto thee, both the highe and loftie similitude of a *Seraphin*, & the humble forme of him that was crucified, inwardly inflaming thee, and outwardly leaving his marcks vpon thee: that like as another Angell ascending from the rising of the sunne, thou mightst haue in thy selfe the signe of the living



God, it doth not only giue vnto the former visions  
 firme cause of credite and beliefe; but receaue  
 also from them, vndoubted testimony of the truth.  
 Behold nowe, in seauen apparitions of the Crosse  
 of Christ (in thee and about thee) according to the  
 order and course of times marvellously exhibited  
 and shewen, thou art as it were by sixe degrees,  
 nowe happily come vnto this leauenth, wherein  
 thou makest thy final rest & abode. For the Crosse  
 of Christ, being in the very first beginning of thy  
 conversion, as well proposed vnto thee, as on thy  
 part also assumed, and being from thenceforth, in  
 the whole progresse of thy conuersation, by thee  
 carried, through the course of a most approved  
 life, as remaining in thy selfe continually, & being  
 demonstrated vnto others, for matter of example,  
 doth by so euident a clearenesse of certaine know-  
 ledge, discover thee to haue accomplished the very  
 height of Evangelicall perfection: that this soe rare  
 demonstration of Christian wisdom, figured in  
 the dust of thy fleshe, no man that is truly devout,  
 may set at naught, no man that is truly faithfull,  
 may with stand, no man that is truly humble, may  
 lightly regard, because it is verely & truly shewen,  
 by God himselfe from heauen; and is well worthy,  
 of all good acceptation.

#### THE FORTENTH CHAPTER.

*Of his Patience, and Death.*

**N**Ovv blessed Saint Francis, being together  
 with Christ wholly fastened vnto the Crosse,

as well



as well in flesh as in spiritte, did not only burne  
with a Seraphicall loue towards God, but did  
also with Christ crucified, thirst after the salvation  
of many. And because he was not able to goe, in re-  
gard of the nailes growing and increasing in his  
feete, he therefore caused his overworne and de-  
caied bodie, to be carried about through Cities,  
and Townes: that soe he might incourage others,  
to carry the Crosse of Christ. And to his brethren,  
he would say: *Let vs nowe beginne, my brethren, to serue  
our Lord God: because hitherto we haue donne but little  
good.* And nowe he was inflamed, with a great de-  
fire of minde, to returne vnto his first grounde  
workes, of humility; as namely to minister vnto  
the Leapers, according as in the beginning, he had  
binne wont to doe: and though his feeble bodie,  
were wholly spent and consumed with labour; yet  
neverthelesse, to recall it, vnto the former serui-  
tude. For he purposed, vnder the Conduct and help  
of Christ, to doe great matters: and bearing within  
his overweariied members, a spiritte of great fer-  
vour and fortitude; he was in hope by a new con-  
flict to triumphe over his enemy. For it is no waite  
possible, that either sloth or feeblenesse should  
there haue any place, where the prick of loue, doth  
vrge and provoke euermore vnto greater things.  
But he, had in his fleshe, soe great a concord, vnto  
his spiritte, and so great a promptnesse also, of obe-  
dience, therevnto; that whereas he did wholly bend  
himselfe, to aspire vnto all manner of holinesse; yet  
did the fleshe, not only make no resistance, but did  
indeavour, to outgoe the spiritte.

St. Bonaventura



And that the man of God, might gaine a more abundant treasure, and heape, of merittes, at which are verely and truly consummated, in the vertue of Patience, he beganne to be soe heavily laden, with many sortes of infirmities, that hardly did there remaine any parte of his bodie, that was free from the violence of some disease. In so much that, through fundrie, long and continuall sicknesses, he was finally brought to that passe, that his flesh being nowe quite consumed, he was as it were nothing but skinn and bones. And being pressed in body with hard and greivous afflictions, yet would he never reckon of them by the name of paines, but would call them by the name of Sisters. But being at one time, assailed with the extreame sharpnesse, of his fundrie infirmities, in more extraordinarie manner, than he had binne at any time before, one of the brethren, being but a simple man, said thus vnto him: Brother, make your praier vnto our Lord, to deale more mildely with you: for he seemeth to hold, to heauie a hand, vpon you. Wherevpon, the holy man, crying out with a certaine mourneful kinde of complainte, did say vnto him. Vnlesse I did knowe thee to be of a very simple puritie, I would from henceforth abhorre thy companie: seeing that thou hast presumed, to reprehend, the diuine iudgements of God, concerning me, and although he were wholly worne and wasted, with the long continuance of his greivouse sicknesse, yet casting himself downe vpon the earth, he hurte his feeble bones, with a hard fall. And kissing the grounde, I giue thanks



vnto thee (saied he) O Lord God, for all the my griefes, and I beseeche thee my Lord, to encrease them, if it toe please thee, even a hundred folde; for this shall be vnto me most acceptable, that thou spare not to afflict me with paines, considering that the fullfilling of thy holy will, is vnto me a comforte, more than most plentiful and abundant. Whereby it seemed vnto the brethren, that they did behold as it were another *Iob*: whoc, as the afflictions of his fleshe did increase, did himselfe also so much the more increase in courage & strength of minde.

But he knewe the time of his deathe long before and the day of his departure being euen now at hand, he saied vnto his brethren, that he was very presently to put of the tabernacle of his body, according as had binne by Christ revealed vnto him. Having therefore bin for two yeates space, from the impression of his sacred Stigmats as namely from the twentieth yeare after his conversion, by many hard tryng stroakes of distresfull infirmities hewed and squared out, as a well polished stone, fitte to be placed in the building of the heavenly Hierusalem, and having also as a peice of forge worke, vnder the hāmer of manifold tribulations, binne finally brought to perfection, he required himselfe to be carried to the place of our Ladie of *Portiuncula*, that where he had receaued, the spirite of grace, there might he render vp, his spirite of life. And being conueied to that place, to the end he might shewe, by the example of truth himselfe, that he held nothing in common with the



world: in that his infirmitie which was soe greivouse, that it contained in it selfe, wellnigh all manner of discales: making himselfe all naked, he did in the fervour of spiritte, cast himselfe downe prostrate, vpon the naked ground: that in that very last hower, wherein the enemy had yet, power to be angry, he might wraastle naked, with the naked, hand to hand. Thus having nowe disapparelled himselfe, even of his poore sackcloth garment, and lieing in this wise vpon the earth, he lifted vp his face to heaven; according to his wonted manner: and intending, wholly to the glory thereof, he did with his left hand, cover the wounde of his right side, that it might not be percoaved. And he saied vnto his brethren, *That which is my part I haue done vnto you: and that which is yours, Christ vouchsafe to shewe you.*

Whervpon, the companions of this holy Sainte, betaking themselves to teares: as being stricken, with a marvellouse darte, of compassion, one of them, whom the man of God, would say to be his guardian, knowing his inward desire, by divine revelation, rose sodeinly out of his place: and taking a coate, with a Corde and a paire of breeches, gaue them vnto the poore servant of Christ, saicing: These things I doe lend vnto thee, as vnto a poore man, receaue them therefore, as at the commaundement, of holy obedience. Hereat the holy man greatly reioyced, and by voice of exultation, discovered the gladsonnesse of his harte: for that he sawe himselfe, to haue preserved his faith, vnto Lady Poverty, nowe firme and inviolate,



violate, euen to the end. And lifting vp his handes to heaven, he magnified his Christ, for that being disburdened, of all things, he was now to goe free to him. For all these things, he had donne, out of the zeale he bare to poverty, so farre forth that he would not haue so much as an habitte, but such as had binne lent vnto him by another man. And certainly it was his desire, to be in all things conformable, vnto Christ crucified, who did in poverty and distresse, hang naked on the Crosse. Wherefore he did both in the beginning of his conversion, make himselfe naked, before the Bishoppe, and would now also, in the very consummation and end of his life, goe naked out of the world. And to the brethren that were assisting about him, he enioyned in the obedience of Charity, that when they should see him to be deade, they should suffer him for so long space afterwards, to lie naked vppon the ground, as one might easily goe, the length of a mile. O most Christian man indeed, who by a perfect imitation, endeauoured himselfe to be comfortable, in his life time, to Christ, living; in his deathe, to Christ, dieing; and after his deathe, to Christ also, being dead: and was made worthy, to be, with the expresse similitude thereof adorned.

But, the very howre of his passage, even now approaching, he caused all the brethren that were in that place, to be called vnto him; and endeavouring himselfe, with comfortable wordes to mitigate the griefe, they conceaued for his death he did with a fatherly affection exhorde them, vn-



to the loue of God. And of the preſeruation of  
 Patience and Povertie, and of the faith alſo of the  
 Holy Romane Church, he enlarged his ſpeache;  
 preferring the holy Goſpel, before all other in-  
 ſtructions. And as his brethren ſatte runde about  
 him, he reached out his handes vpon them, and  
 caſting his armes overthwart, in manner of the  
 Croſſe (becauſe he evermore loved that ſigne ex-  
 ceedingly) he bleſſed all the Brethren, aſwel them  
 that were preſent, as them that were abſent, in  
 the power and name, of him that was crucified.  
 And furthermore alſo, he ſaid vnto them; Fare  
 yee well my Children all, in the feare of our Lord,  
 and be permanent therein continually. And be-  
 cauſe the temptation and tribulation, that ſhal her-  
 after be, is even now at hand: bleſſed are they,  
 who ſhall perſeuer in theſe things, which they  
 haue already yndertaken. But I make haſte, to go  
 to God, vnto whoſe grace; I commend you all.  
 This ſweete admonition, thus concluded and en-  
 ded; the Bleſſed man, moſt deare vnto God, cauſed  
 the book of the holy Goſpels, to be brought vnto  
 him: and required that parte of Saint Iohn Goſ-  
 pell, which beginneth at theſe wordes: *Before the*  
*feſtiuall day of Paſche*, to be reade vnto him. But he  
 himſelf, as well as he could, bracke forth, into the  
 reheareſall of this Pſalme, *with my voice, I haue*  
*cried out vnto our Lord: with my voice, I haue made my*  
*prayer vnto our Lord.* and bringing the Pſalme to the  
 ende, *the iuſt* (ſaith he) *do expect me, untill thou geue*  
*reward vnto me.* Thus all the miſteries, being nowe  
 at length, in him accompliſhed; that moſt holy  
 ſoule

*Iohn. 13. 1.*

*Pſal. 141.*



soule, being loosed from the flesh, and swallowed  
 uppe, in the vnsearchable depth, of Godes  
 heavenly brightnesse; the blessed man, fel a sleep  
 in our Lord.

At what time, one of his brethren and Disci-  
 ples, saw that blessed soule, in the forme of a most  
 glittering starre, to be borne aloft, vppon a pure  
 white litle clond; & so to be caried over many wa-  
 ters, by a straght passage vp to Heaven: as being  
 by the whitenesse of a high degree of holinesse,  
 most brightly shining; and being also replenished  
 with the great plenty and aboundance, of heaven-  
 ly wisdom and grace, whereby the holy man  
 deserved, to enter into a place of light and peace,  
 where he remayneth at rest with Christ, worlde  
 without ende. The Minister also of the brethren  
 in the land of labour, was at that time, brother  
*Augustine*, a man doubtlesse very holy and iuste:  
 who being even then in his last hower, and having  
 a good while before, quite loest his speache, did  
 yet in the hearing of all that were present, so-  
 deinely cry out and say, Expect me O Father,  
 expect me a while, for behold I come even now  
 with you. The Brethren in the meane while  
 muche marveiling and enquiring, to whome he  
 spake in suche wise: he confidently saied vnto  
 them, Doe you not see our Father *Francis*, whoe  
 goeth nowe to Heaven? And presently his holy  
 soule, partinge from his flesh, did followe the  
 most Holy Father.

At that very time was the Bisshope of *Assisium*  
 gone vppon Pilgrimage to the Oratorie of Saint



*Note the words of this holy saint at his death. Behold I learne this world & goe to heaven.*

*Michael in the Mountaine Garganus*, to whome blessed Saint Francis appearing, in the night of his passadge, saied: Behold I leaue the world, and goe to Heaven. The Bishop therefore rising betimes in the morning declared, to them that were in his company, what he had scene: and returning to *Assisum*, he founde for certaine truthe, after diligent enquire made, that at that very howre, wherein he had by vision, so much made known vnto him, the blessed Father, departed out of this world. And at the howre also of the departure, of this holy man, which was about the twilight of the night following: the Larkes, which are birds that loue the light, and do abhorre the darksomnesse of the twilight, did nevertheless come in a great multitude, vpon the toppe of the house: & plaieng themselues a good while, with an vnusual kinde of reioycing, gaue thereby a no lesse ioyful than evident testimony, of the glory, of the Saint who was wont to enuite them, vnto the praises, of Almighty God.

#### THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

*Of his Canonisation and of the translation of his sacred bodie.*

**S**AINT Francis therefore, the servant & frind, of the Highest; the institutour and guider, of the Friars Minors; the professour of Poverty, the forme of Penance, the Preacher of Verity; the Mirrour of Holinesse, and the sampler of all E-

vange



vangelicall perfection; being prevented from above, by heavenly grace; did come by a well ordered and due proceeding, from the lowest estate to the highest pitche of vertue. This admirable man; as being passingly ritche in Poverty; and highly advanced, in Humility; prompt also and active, in mortification; and prudent, in simplicity; and briefly of singular note and observance, for al manner of honest conversation, whome our Lord had made to be in his life time, wonderfully esteemed, him did he make to be in his death incomparably more renowned. For when this blessed man departed out of the world: his sacred spiritte, entring the house of eternity, and being made gloriousse, with the full draught of the fontaine of life: left behind him, in his body, certayne expresse signes, of the future glory. That his most holy flesh, which having binne crucified with the vices thereof, had now passed over into a new creature, might both by a singularity of priviledge, sette forth the shewe of our Saviours Passion, and might also by the novelty of the Miracle, foreshew the resemblance of his resurrection.

For in those his most happy members, there were certayne nailes to be seene, which had bine wonderfully made, of his very flesh, by power devine: and were so marveilously grown therein, that being pressed or strained on either side, they would, as it were certayne naturall and hard sinewes, presently rebounde, to the contrary parte. There was also more apparantly founde in his



body, howbeit not inflicted nor made by hand of man, the hole of a wounde in his side, like vnto the wounded side of our Saviour: which did in him our Redeemer, bring forth, the sacrament of humane redemption, and generation. And the similitude of the nailes, were black like vnto it, but the wounde of the side, was of a red colour: & being by the striking of the flesh, brought into a certaine kinde of roundenesse: it seemed to be as it were a most beautifull rose. As for the rest of his flesh, notwithstanding that of former time it had, as well out of infirmity as out of nature declined to blacknesse: yet now brightly shining with an excessive Luster of pure whitenesse, it did well resemble the exquisite beautifullnesse of the second Stole. Moreover the limmes and members of his body, appeared to be so softe and tractable, to such as felt them, that they seemed to be changed, into the tendernesse of a litle childe: and did make shewe, to be graced, with certaine evident signes, of innocency. Seeing therefore, that the nailes seemed to be blacke, in his most pure and white flesh, and the wounde of his side, to be red, like vnto a most faire and flourishing rose, it is in no sorte to be wondred at, if soe delightfull and miraculous a varietie, gaue cause both of ioy and admiration, vnto all the beholders.

And true it is that the devout children, did indeed shed teares and lament, for the taking away of soe loving a Father: but yet were they replenished with no small measure, of ioy and gladnesse, meane while that in him, they did most

(weere-

*Apoc. 7. 13*



sweetely kisse, the sacred signes, of the highest king. And the novelty of the miracle, turned their mournfull complainte into surpassing ioy: and the true vnderstanding thereof, ravished the deepe searcher of the matter, with amazement. For a spectacle soe vnusuall, and so notable also therewithall, was vnto all the beholders, both an establishment of faith, and a provocation of loue and affection: and to the hearers thereof, a matter of admiration, and a stirring vp of desire, to see and behold it. For the death of this good Father, was no sooner heard of, and the fame of the miracles spreed abroad: but the people came withall expedition flocking together to the place that with the eies of their flesh: they might see & viewe the things, which might repel al doubt fro reason, and might heape vp abundance of ioyes, to their affections.

Very many therefore of the Cittizens of *Assisium* were admitted, with their eies to behold and with their lipps to kisse, those most holy Stigmats. But one of the being a knight, wel learned doubtlesse and wise whose name was *Hierome*, a man also of much fame and accounte, being doubtful of these holy signes, & incredulous, like vnto *Thomas*, did in the presence of the Brethren, and other the Cittizens, more freely and boldly, moue the nailes, and did with his owne handes, touche, the hands feete, and side, of the Sainte: that whilest by feeling and touching he handled those true signes of the woundes of Christ, he might cut of, all manner of wounde of doubtfullnesse, from the harte,

both



both of himselfe and others. For which cause, euen he himselfe among others, being afterwards made a constant witnesse, of this truth so certainly known, did by oathe vpon the holy Gospells, testifie the same. But the brethren and Children that had binne called to the passage, of the blessed Father, did withall the multitude, of the people assembled to religiously employ themselves, in dedicating vnto the diuine praises of God, that night wherein the worthy Confessour of Christe, was departed, that there seemed to be held, noe exequies for the dead, but rather, a blessed watch and warde of Angels,

*Heere we  
may see the  
custome of  
the Catholike  
Church in  
burying  
her dead  
with wax  
candels  
lighted  
with hym-  
nes & spi-  
rituall  
Psalmes.*

And when morning came, the trouppes of people, that were gathered together, taking the boughes of trees, and a number of waxe lights, in their hands, did with Hymnes & Canticles, bring the holy body, to the Citie of *Asisium*. But passing by the Church of *Saint Damian*, wherein that noble Virgin *Saint Clare*, now gloriouse in Heaven, did then remaine inclosed with the rest of the Virgines, and making there some stay for a while, they offered that sacred body, ennobled and adorned, with those heavenly pearles, to be seene and kissed: by those holy Virgins. And comming afterwards to the Citie with exceeding great ioy, they did withall reverence, place the precious treasure which they brought, in the Church of *Saint George*. For in that place, being but a litle child, he learnt his letters: and thereafterwards he preached, and there last of all he receaved, his first place, of rest. The venerable

Father



Father passed out of the shippewracke of this worlde, in the yeare of our Lords incarnation, on thousand, two hundred, twentie sixe, the fourth day of October, being Saterday, in the evening; and was buried upon the Sunday.

And by the influence doubtlesse, of Gods divine aspect; this blessed man did forthwith beginne, to shine with many and wondrous miracles; that the highe degree of his holinesse, which duringe his life heare on earth, had binne thoroughly notified vnto the world, touching the mannadgement & direction of manners, by the exâples of perfect iustice, might now be by miracles of diuine power; ratified & made good from Heaven, where he liueth with Christe for ever, to the absolute confirmation, of all faith and true beliefe. And whereas in diuers parts of the world, his glorious miracles, and the large benefites, by him obtained, had inflamed very many, vnto the deuotion of Christe; and had also incited very many vnto the reuerence of this his Saint, by generall reports, both of wordes and workes, it came to the eares of the supreme Bishoppe, Pope Gregory, the ninth; what great and admirable thinges, God did worke and effect by his seruant, Saint Francis. Whereupon, that worthy Pastor of the Church, knowing his marveillous holinesse, by testimony of most credible authority, and being thereof certified, not only out of such miracles, as he had heard to haue binne donne by him after his death, but out of such also, as he himselfe had seene with his eyes, and felt with his handes,



to be tried by experience, in his life time; wherby he had no manner of doubt, but that he was now glorified, by Christ, in Heaven; to the intent he might conformably worke with Christ, whose Vicar he was; did purpose, vpon a good & Godly Consideration, to make him famous, vpon the earth: as being most worthy, of all honour & reverence. And for to giue more absolute and vndoubted assurance, vnto al the whole world; of the glorified estate, of this most holy man: he caused the miracles by him donne, having bin formerlie founde out, drawen together in writing, and approved by conueniēt witnessses, to be examined by such of the Cardinals, as seemed to be lesse favorable vnto that matter and businessse. After diligent enquire whereof, the Miracles being by them all fully ratified and allowed, he did, by the vniforme Councel and assent of his brethren, and of all the Prelats, that were then resident in his Courte, resolve and decree, to accomplish his Canonization. And coming personally vnto the City of *Assisium*, in the yeare of our Lords incarnation, one thousand, two hundred: twentie & eight, he did on Sunday, the sixteenth of Iuly, with great solemnities, to long to be rehearsed, enbolle the blessed Father, in the Catalogue of Saints.

But in the yeare of our Lorde, one thousand, two hundred, and thirtie, the brethren, beinge assembled to a generall Chapter, then celebrated and kept, at *Assisium*, the body dedicated vnto our Lord, was on the five and twentieth of May, translated vnto a goodly Church, that was built

and



& erected, in honor of him. And whils that sacred treasure (signed with the seale, of the most supream and Sovereigne king) was to that place, transported, he whose Image and likenesse, he bare, did vouchsafe to worke, many and sundry miracles: that by his health working odoure, the affections of the faithfull, might be drawn to runne after Christ. For it was, in very deed, befitting and well be seeming, that whom God having made to be in his life time pleasing & wel beloved vnto himselfe, had by the grace of contemplation, translated into Paradise, like vnto *Enoch*, and had by the zeale of charitie, taken vp into heaven in a fierie Chariot, like vnto *Elias*; nowe might those happy bones of him, flourishing among the heavenly flowers of eternall planting; by meane of a strange and admirable kinde of blossoming, yeild forth a sweete and pleasant savour, from the place, wherein they were enshrined. And therefore as this blessed man, had binne in his life time famous for many signes of vertues; soe from the day of his passadge, vntill this very present, he doth in divers of the world, by power divine, glorifying it selfe in him, most beautifully and clearely shine, with many prodigious and notable miracles. For the blinde and deafe, the dumbe and lame, the diseased of the Drop sic, and sicke of the Palfey, possessed persons & Leapers, they that haue binne in shippe wracke and Captivity, haue by his merrittes, found help and remedie, as also all diseases necessities and perrills, haue thereby binne relieved. Yea, and by the miraculouse restoring of life by him, to many

*Cant. 1. 4.*

*Gen. 5. 24.*

*4. Reg. 2.*

*11.*



that haue binne dead, in this blessed Sainte, hath binne sufficiently notified to all faithfull people, the marveilouse magnificence of the Power of the Higheſt, to whom to be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

### THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

*Containing certaine miracles donne by Saint Francis, after his death. Which becauſe it is long, and conſidering that the miracles be of diuers kindes, is therefore parted into tenne diuiſions, according to the ſeuerall Titles of the miracles.*

*The firſt diuiſion: Of the vertue and force, of the holy Stigmattes.*

**B**EING, to the honor of Almighty God, and to the glory of the blessed Father Saint Francis, to write thoſe approved miracles, which were by him donne, after his glorification in heaven: from that pointe, I thought it moſt eſpecially meete, to take my beginning: wheare in the efficacy of the Croſſe of Ieſus is ſhewen vnto vs, and wherein the glory thereof, is vnto vs renewed. This newe man therefore Saint Francis, flouriſhed nowe by meane of a newe and admirable miracles; in that he appeared to be ennobled with a ſinguler priuiledge in all former ages not graunted vnto any: namely to be graced and adorned with the Sacred Stigmattes of our Lord, and in the body of this death, to be configured vnto the bodie of him, that was Crucified.



fied. Of whom, what soeuer may be saied by tounge of man, shalbe inferiour, vnto his due, and worthy praise. For the whole indeavour doubtlesse of the man of God, aswell that which was publique, as that which was private, was altogether employed about the Crosse of our Lord. And to the ende he might outwardly signe his body, with the signe of the Crosse, which was from the beginning of his conversion, imprinted in his harte, incompassing himselfe, with in a very Crosse, he tooke vpon him the habite of pennance: which did plainly represent, the Image and forme of a Crosse: that even as his minde had inwardly put on that Lord himselfe that was crucified, soe might his bodie also put on, the Ensignes and armes of the Crosse. And that in what signe, God Almighty had subdned, the powers of the aire: in the same, might the armie of this holy man maintaine the warfare of our Lord. But from the beginning of the time wherein he first beganne, to serue vnder the standerd of the Crucifixe, diuers misteries of the Crosse, did in gloriouse manner appeare about him: as to him that shall duely consider the course of his life, it may be evidently and clearely knowen, howe by meane of a seavenfolde apparition of our Lord his Crosse, he was aswell in thought, as in affection and act, wholly by the extaticall loue of him transformed, into the figure and resemblance, of him that was crucified. Worthely therefore did the clemency of the highest King (beyond all estimation of man condescending, vnto those that were his true lovers) designe him in his bodie to beare the banner of his



crosse, that he who had binne forearmed, with a  
 marveilouse loue of the crosse, might also be made  
 admirable, by a marveilouse honor of the Crosse.  
 And for the irrefrigable establisment, of this  
 wondrous miracle, not only the testimonies of  
 them that haue both seene and felt it, being by all  
 manner of meanes, most worthy to be beleived:  
 but also, sundrie marveilouse apparitions, and ver-  
 tuous effects, shining after his death doe helpfully  
 concurre, to driue al cloudish darkefomnesse, quite  
 away from the minde. For our most holy Lord, of  
 happy memorie. Pope *Gregory* the ninth (of whom  
 that blessed man had prophetically foretold, that  
 he should be raised vp to the dignitie, of the Sea  
 Apostolique) did beare in his harte, before such  
 time, as he had enrolled that standerd bearer of the  
 Crosse, into the Catalogue of Saints, a certaine  
 scruple of doubt, concerning the wounde of his  
 side. But one night (according as that happy Pastor,  
 did himselfe, with teares, reporte) blessed Saint  
*Francis* did with a certaine kinde of discontented  
 countenance, in sleepe appeare, vnto him: and re-  
 proving his doubtfulnessse of harte, lifted vp his  
 right arme, discovered his wounde, and required of  
 him a Phiolle glasse, to gather vp the overflowing  
 bloud, that issued out of his side. The chiefe Bis-  
 hoppe offered him forthwith the Phiolle, by him  
 required: which seemed to be with the bloud that  
 came out of his side, filled vp euen to the toppe.  
 And from thenceforth, he beganne with soe great  
 a devotion to be affected, and with soe zealous an  
 emulation to be inflamed, vnto that sacred miracle

that



that he could by no meanes indure, any man by proude contradiction, presumptuously to disgrace those illustrious holy signes, but he would correct him with a severe rebuke.

In like manner a certaine Friar Minor, being by office a preacher, and a man of greare note for his excellent fame and vertue, although he were of the holy Stigmattes of this blessed Saint, fully perswaded, yet seeking one time within himselfe, a reason of this miracle, according to the course of humane vnderstanding, did beginne to stagger and waver in minde, out of a scruple of some certaine kinde of doubt. And where as by giving way to his owne sensualitie, he did for diuers dayes together sustaine, this manner of conflict, Saint Francis did one night in sleepe appeare vnto him, with his feet all durte, bearing shewe of displeasure, howbeit in humility, and of anger, but yet with in the compasse of patience. And what (saied he) meane these agonies of distrust, in thee? What meane these durte dreggs, of doubts? Behold my handes, and see my feete. Who then beholding his handes to be peirced through, but not yet perceaving, the Stigmattes of his bemired feete; remoue away (saied the blessed Saint) the durte from my feet, & know for certaine the places of the nailes therof. Wherevpon, he taking hold of them with great deuotion, did seeme to wipe of the durte, and with his hands to touche the places of the nailes. And as soone as he waked out of his sleepe, weeping in great abundance, he washed away his former affections (being in a sorte durted and defiled) no lesse with a



streame of teares, than with publique and open confession.

In the Citty of Rome, a certaine noble matrone of greate accounte, as well for her vertuous cariage and conditions, as for the glory also, of her parentage, had chosen Saint *Francis* to be her patrone: whose painted picture, she had in her private closet, where she vsed to pray to the father, in secrette. Which she heedelessly observing, one day, whilest she was at her prayers, and therewithall perceaving that it had not the sacred signes of the Stigmattes; beganne thereat not a litle both to sorrowe and wonder. But it was no marveile, though they were wanting, in the picture; being that they were, by the Painter himselfe, neglected. Yet neverthelesse, whilest she did for divers daies, in great carefulnesse of minde, debate with herselfe, what might be the cause of this manner of defect, beholde those marveilouse signes, sodeinly one day appeared in the picture, even in such sorte, as in other pictures of the Saint they were wont to be painted. The woman thereat conceyving somme feare, fourthwith called vnto her a deuoute daughter of her owne, and earnestly enquired of her, if the picture had not binne without the Stigmattes, even vntill that very time. Shee for her part, did affirme and sweare, that of former time; it had ben without those sacred Stigmattes, and had them nowe therein verely appearing. But because the minde of man, doth oftentimes enforce it selfe to falle, and doth also frequently cal, the truth into doubt there entred into the womans harte an evil kinde

of



of distrust, least haply the picture might have ben marked with those signes even from the beginning. But that the former miracle, might not be contemned, the power of God vouchsafed, to adde thereto, a second. For the signes forthwith disappearing, the picture was of the priviledges, thereby deprived: that by the signe ensuing, prooffe might be made, of that which had gonne before.

In *Catalonia* also at a place called *Ilerda*, it chaunced that a certaine man named *John*, whose bare greate devotion to blessed *Saint Francis*, did travell one evening late, along by a certaine way, where some desperate persons, did secrettely lie in waite, to doe a murder: howbeit not vpon him, with whom they had no enmity, but vpon another that seemed to be like vnto him, and was even then also with him in company. But one of them issueinge sodeinly out of the place of deceite, & taking him to be the mā that was his enemy, did doe deathfullie becoare him, with a number of woundes, that there was no hope to be had, for the recoverie of his life. For, at the very first stroake, he had almost cut of his whole shoulder and arme together: and with the second blow, which entred in at the brest somewhat vnder the nipple; he made such an open gap, & rifture into the bodie, that the winde coming out frō thēce, would at one time put out some fixe light Candells, being ioyned alltogether. Finding therefore by the iudgement of the Physicians, that his cure was impossible, in regard of the putrifaction of his woundes, which yelded forth such an intollerable stēche, that even his owne wife, did

*If the vse  
of pictures  
had not  
bene law-  
full God  
had not  
wrought  
so many  
wonders a-  
bout this  
picture.*

St. Bonaventura



*Loe where  
Saints are  
inuocated  
and being  
inuocated  
doe helpe  
those  
which pray  
vnto the.*

exceedingly loth it; & perceiving also that he could not haue help by any humane remedies, he wholly turned himselfe, with all his best devotion to crave the patronadge, of the blessed Father Saint Francis, whom with the blessed Virgin, he had most faithfully invocated, in the very midst of his stroakes. And behold, as he lay miserably waking in his bed, all solitarie and full of distresse, and did with mournful lamentation, oftentimes reiterate the name of Francis; there stood one by him in the habite of a friar Minor, having entred, as to him it seemed, in at the windowe, whoe calling him by his name, did say vnto him; Because that in me thou hast had hope & confidence be holde our Lord will deliuer thee. And being, by the distressed creature, demaunded who he was; he made answere, that he was Francis. Wherevpon drawing nigh forthwith vnto him, he presently vnloosed the clothes, that bounde vp his woundes: and did, as he conceived, annoynt all those woundes with a certaine kinde of oyntement. But so soone as ever he felt the sweete touche, of those sacred handes, which by the force and vertue, of the Stigmattes of our Saviour, were able to giue helpe and remedie, the corruption being driven quite away, the flesh fully repaired, and the woundes thoroughly healed, he was perfectly restored vnto his former health and strength. Which being donne, the blessed Father departed. And he finding himself to be healed, and bursting forth, into a glad some voice, of the praise of God, and of blessed Saint Francis; did presently call his wife vnto him. Who running speedily, and behol-



beholding him, now to stand vpon his feete, whom shee made accounte shee should haue buried, in the day following; being stricken with a great terror and amazement thereat, did fill, with her clamor and outcrie, al the neighbourhood ther about. But his neighbours and frinds comming in strait waies vpon him, and goeing aboute to haue him backe againe to his bed, as one that were frantique and out of his wittes, he vtterly refused soe to doe, shewing himselfe to be now healed, & throughly recovered. Wherevpon they were all, soe exceedingly astonished, that being as it were without their sense or vnderstanding, they held it to be a fantastick thing, which they did behold: considering, that whom they had but a litle before seene, to be with most cruell woundes butchered, and worne quite away; him did they now obserue, to be full of ioy, vpon the perfect recoverie of his former strength. And therefore the saied vnto them: doe ye in no wise feare, neither yet doe ye thinke it to be a vaine thing which you see: because Saint Francis is but lately departed from the place; who hath by the touche of those his holy handes, perfectly cured me, of all my woundes. Now, as the fame of this miracle, was at length generally spread abroade, all the people repaired with speede, vnto him: and beholding in soe manifest a wonder, the force of the Stigmattes of blessed Saint Francis, they were filled therevpon both with admiration and ioy, and did also extoll the standard-bearer of Christ, with many great and excellent praises. And with good cause doubtlesse it was, that the blessed

N. 6

Father,



*If the  
Saints be-  
ing now  
dead in  
flesh, doe  
live in  
soule with  
Christ and  
in the fu-  
ture iudg-  
ment are  
to rise a-  
gaine with  
him howe  
commeth it  
to passe  
that the  
ignorant  
of our  
dayes doe  
rather  
with here-  
tickes call  
the dead.*

*Luc. 10. 30.  
Then slee-  
ping with  
S. Paul.*

Father, being now dead according to the flesh, but yet living with Christ in heaven, did both by the marveilouse apparition of his presence, and by the sweete touche also of his holy handes, giue present healthe and recoverie to this poore man, thus pitifully and deadly wounded, considering that he himselfe also had taken vpon him the very Stigmattes and markes of him, whose mercifully dying and marveilously againe a rising, hath by the vertue of his owne woundes, healed all mankind, which had bin sorely wounded, and left for almost dead.

At *Potentia*, a Cittie in *Apulia*, there was a certaine man named *Roger*: a man of honorable place, and a Cannon of the great Church. Whoe being one time not well at ease, and comming even then into the Church to pray, where the picture of blessed Saint *Francis* was sette out with his gloriouse Stigmattes, did beginne to doubt of the high degree and nature of that miracle, as of a thing altogether vnusuall and impossible. And sodeinly therefore, while, being inwardly wounded in his minde, he thought with himselfe such vaine and frivolouse things; behold, in the palme of his left hand, vnder his gloue, he felt himselfe to be grievously wounded: hearing the sounde of a stroake, as if it had ben of an arrowe shot out of a crosbowe. And being presently therevpon no lesse pained with the wounde, the astonished with the sound, he pulled of his gloue, fro his hand: that by sight of the eye, he might fully know what he had already perceaved, both by his feeling, & hearing. And whereas



in the palme of his hand, there had formerly ben,  
 no signe of any stroake at al, yet now he perceaved  
 therin a wonde, newly made (as it were) with the  
 stroak of an arrowe: out of which proceeded, so  
 great a violence of burning heate: that he seemed  
 ready, almost to die, for paine thereof. It is a mar-  
 veilouse thing to be spokē. There appeared not in  
 the gloue, any signe thereof at all: that vnto the  
 secrette and hidden wounde of his hart, the paine  
 of his bodily wounde, secretly receaved, might  
 duly be conformed. From that time forward ther-  
 fore, for two daies space together, he cried and  
 roared pittifully, out of the most grievouse vio-  
 lence of his torment: and the lurking thought of  
 his incredulous harte, he discovered vnto al men.  
 He furthermore confessed, and did also sweare,  
 that he verely and truly believed, the holy Stig-  
 mattes to haue binne in blessed Saint Francis: avow-  
 ing and protesting, that all fantasies of doubt were  
 now gone quite away, and departed. He finally  
 in humble manner besought the Saint of God, by  
 those his holy Stigmattes, to help him: and the  
 manifold praiers of his hart, he watered and en-  
 riched, with a plentifull streame of teares. Now  
 see another wonder. The incredulity being thus,  
 vtterly cast away: after the health of the minde,  
 health also of the body, forthwith ensued. For  
 now all paine and grieve was at an ende, the bur-  
 ning heate, was cooled, and of the blow it selfe,  
 no marke or signe remained. And soe it came to  
 passe, that by an euident burning of the flesh, the  
 secrette infirmitie of the minde, should be, out

*Behold  
 where this  
 holy Saint  
 beinge in-  
 uocated  
 doth forth-  
 with heare  
 the prayer  
 of him  
 which  
 doth pray  
 vnto him.*



Mat. 20.  
15.

of the provision of Gods divine clemencie, cured and that by recovery of the minde, perfect cure also, and recovery of the very flesh, mould be together there withall obtained. The man became afterwards humble vnto God, devout, & subject to the order of the brethren, in perpetuall familiarity. And the formal course and proceeding of this miracle, being testified by the oathes of men, and autentically confirmed by letters, signed with the Bishoppes seale, did come vnto our vnderstanding by relation from him, vpon certaine knowledge: Let therefore no place of doubt remaine, concerning these holy Stigmattes, nor yet let any mans eye be nought in this point, because God is good; as though that the vouchsafing of such a manner of giste, were not agreeable to Gods everlasting and endlesse goodnesse. For if, by meane of that Seraphicall loue, many members should be soe conioyned vnto Christe their heade; that both in this warfare, they should be founde worthy of the like armour, and should also in the kingdome, be founde worthy to be advanced vnto the like glory, no man of right iudgment and vnderstanding, can say, but that this doth verily appertaine, vnto the glory of Christe himselfe.

### THE SECOND DIVISION.

*Of dead persons raised to  
life againe,*

**I**N the Castle of the Mountaine *Maranus* nigh vnto *Beneuentum*, it chanced that a certaine woman,



woman, that bare vnto Saint Francis, an especial great devotion, departed this present life. But in the night time, when the Priests of the Church were assembled together, to celebrate the exequies and vigils of the dead, with singing of the Psalmes; shee sodeinly in the sight of them all, raised vp here selfe vpon her bed, and calling vnto her a Priest of the company, one namely who had binne her God-Father; did say vnto him: Oh Father I desire to make my confession. For I being dead, should haue bin committed to a straight and hard prison: for that I had not in my life time confessed one sinne, the which I will now discover vnto you. But at the intercession for me made by Saint Francis, whom during my life I serued with deuoute affection, it is now granted vnto me, to returne vnto my body: that hauing discovered that sinne, I may meritt and obtaine everlasting life. And beholde in the sight of you all, so soone as I shall haue vttered the same, I shall make hast vnto the rest, which is promised vnto me. Being therefore with feare confessed vnto the Priest, who was himselfe also stricken with feare and amazement, after absolution receaved, shee quietly settled herselfe in her bed, and happily departed this life, in our Lord.

In the Castle of *Pamarcum*, which is scituated vpon the mountaines of *Apulia*, there was a certaine yonge mateden, the only daughter of her Father and Mother: who being but of tender years, and of them most tenderly beloved, was by meane of a violent & greivouse infirmitie, finally brought

To heere  
the ex-  
equies and  
funeralls  
of the dead  
celebrated  
with  
Priests and  
singing of  
Psalmes.

Behold the  
Sacrament  
of Confes-  
sion made  
to a Priest  
according  
to the in-  
stitution  
of the Ca-  
tholique  
Church  
proved by  
a great  
miracle.



See howe  
great is  
the power  
of the  
Saints af-  
ter their  
death.  
As also  
that they  
are to be  
inuocated  
and that  
the inuoca-  
tion of the  
doth not  
iniury that  
inuocation  
which is  
due vnto  
God.

vnto death. Wherevpon her parents, having no hope of any other succession, reputed themselves to be in her, as it were even now already, dead. Their Kinsfolkes therefore and friends assembling together vnto the soe lamentable and dolefull a funerall, the vnhappy Mother lay all along, filled with abondance of sorrowes, not to be spoken nor yet exprest: and being even swallowed vp with sorrow vnto death, had no manner of obseruation. of what was donne in the house. But in the meane while Saint Francis appearing with one only companion, vouchsafed to visite the desolate woman, whom he knew to be deuoute vnto him: and with cōfortable & compassionate wordes, he spake vnto her. Doe not weepe, saied he, for the light of thy candle, which thou dost bewaile as extinguished, is to be by mine intercession, restored vnto thee. The woman forthwith arose vp from the ground, & manifesting vnto all the company, what the Sainte had saied vnto her: did not suffer the dead bodie to be carried out: but in vocating the name of Saint Francis, with greate faith & confidence: and taking hold of her dead daughter, lifted her vp aliue and well in healt, in the sight of them all, and to their exceeding wonder.

Vpon a time it chaunced that the brethren of *Noteria*, craving of a certaine man named *Peter*, a litle carte, for their necessarie vse, he foolishly made answere vnto them, returning vpon them reproache, in steede of the helpe required: and in lieu of the almes which they craved, in honor of *Saint Francis*, he thundered out blasphemie against



his name. But the man presently repented himself of his folly; being toucht in his hart, with the feare of God: least hapely his heauie revēge, should followe; as it failed not forthwith, to fall vpon him. For his eldest sonne, being out of hand taken with sicknesse; diē with in shorte space, make an end of his life. The miserable Father therefore tumbling himselfe vpon the ground; and never ceasing, to call vpon the holy seruante of God *S. Francis*, did with teares cry out aloude, and say, it is I who haue sinned; it is I who haue wickedly spoken: thou shouldst haue chasticed me in mine owne person. But restore now, O Sainte, vnto me repenting that which thou hast taken away from me, impiously blaspheming. Vnto thee I doe yeld my selfe; vnto thy seruices, I doe for euer devote mine endeoures: yea and for the honour of thy name, I will evermore, offer vp a deuote sacrifice of praise, vnto Christ. It is a marveilous thing. At these very wordes the youth arose: and forbidding any further mourning, he aouched that dieing he was separated from his body; and was nowe thereto reduced againe, by blessed *Saint Francis*.

A certaine Romane notaries boy of seaven yeare old; desiring in childish manner, to followe his mother vnto *S. Marke*, his Church; and being by her enforced to stay at home; did cast himselfe out of one of the windowes of the house: and having receaved thereby a deadly bruise; he ended forthwith his life. But his mother who was not farre gone from the place, hearing the sounde of the fall and suspecting the mishappe, of her beloved



*Behold  
how god  
doth con-  
firm by  
miracle  
even the  
faith by  
which it  
is believed  
that the  
Saints  
can raise  
the dead.*

childe, did speedily returne vnto him. And finding her selfe suddenly bereued of her sonne by soe miserable a chaunce, beganne forthwith, in re-venge thereof, to lay violent hands vpon her selfe, and with dolorouse outcries, drew all the neighbourhoode, vnto lamentation with her. But a certaine brother of the order of the minorites, called *Raho*, by name, comming that way to preache, drew night vnto the childe: and being full of faith, spake thus vnto the Father: doe you beleeue that the holy man of God *Saint Francis*, is able to raise your sonne from death, for the loue which he did alwaies beare towards Christ, that was crucified for the restoring of life to mankinde againe? Who answering that he did both firmly beleeue it, and did also faithfully confesse it, and moreover that himselfe would for euer be a devoted seruaunte of that Sainte, if by his merittes, he might deserue to receaue so great a benefite, at the hands of God, that brother, together with another brother that was in his company, did prostrate himselfe in praier, exhorting the rest that were present to doe the like. Which when they had donne, the childe beganne to gape a litle, and opening his eies, and lifting vp also, his armes, he raised vp himselfe: and presently walked before them all in perfect strength being by the marvellous power of the Sainte, at one time, both vnto life and healthe, restored.

In the Citie of *Capua*, it chaunced that a certaine boy, as he was playing with other of his companions, vpon the bancke of the River *Volturnus*, did fall



fall vnder the stream, into the bottome: and being by the  
 swiftnes of the streame, ouerwhelmed, was cove-  
 red vnder the gravel thereof. But at the outerie of  
 the rest of the children, who had binne playing  
 with him about the Riuer, a great multitude of  
 people came to the place. And as all they did both  
 humbly and devoutely invoke the merittes of  
 Saint Francis, that beholding the faich of the pa-  
 rents, who were vnto him much devoted, he  
 would vouchsafe to deliuer the childe, from the  
 perill and danger of death; a cunning and expert  
 swimmer standing a good way off, & hearing their  
 clamors did come vnto them: who after long  
 searche, having at the lengthe called vpon Saint  
 Francis, for his helpe, found a plade, wherein the  
 dead carcase of the boy was in manner of a grate  
 overcovered, with the sandie gravel: which, when  
 he had digged vp, and removed away, he did with  
 grieve beholde, the dead body. But the people  
 that stood by, albeit that they sawe the youthe to  
 be perfectly voided of life, yet neverthelesse, wee-  
 ping and lamenting did crie out and saie, O Saint  
 Francis restore the childe vnto his Father: Yea and  
 the very Iewes that were present, being moved  
 with a naturall compassion, did also say, O Saint  
 Francis, restore the childe, vnto his Father. And so-  
 deinely the boy rising vp in perfect healthe, to the  
 ioy and wonder of them all: humbly desired to be  
 ledde vnto the Church of Saint Francis: that he  
 might devoutely tender thanks vnto him; by  
 whose vertue and power, he knewe himselfe to  
 haue binne, marveilously, reuiued.

At the in-  
 vocation of  
 Saint Frā-  
 cis a boy  
 which was  
 dead is  
 restored to  
 life.



Heere at  
the Vowe  
Which  
a woman  
made in  
honour of  
S. Francis  
if he  
would  
raise her  
sonne  
which  
was slaine  
by the  
ruine of  
an house.  
her sonne  
according  
to her de-  
sire is rai-  
sed againe  
to life.

In the Cittie of *Suessa*, in the streete which is cal-  
led, *Ad Columnas*, a certaine house falling sodein-  
ly downe to the grounde, a yong man was therein  
overtaken, and immediatly slaine. But the rest of the  
men and women that were within, being stirred  
vp at the sounge of the fall, running about some  
one way, and some another, did lifte and remoue  
the wood and stones, on euerie side, and brought  
vnto the miserable mother her dead sonne. But  
shee, fetching store of most bitter sighes, did in  
such manner as shee could, with wofull voice crie  
out vnto Saint *Francis*, saying, O Saint *Francis*, Saint  
*Francis*, restore vnto me my sonne againe. And not  
only shee, but all the rest that were present, did in-  
stantly crave the helpe, of the blessed Father. But  
the dead carckasse having in it neither voice nor  
sence, they put it in a bed: expecting but the next  
day, for the buriall thereof. But the mother ha-  
ving full hope and confidence in our Lord, by the  
merittes of his holy Saint, did make a vow, that  
shee would cover the Altar of blessed Saint *Fran-  
cis*, with new linnen, if he would recall her sonne  
to life againe. And beholde aboute midnight, the  
youth beganne to gape, and yawne: and his mem-  
bers resuming a natural heate, he rose vp alive and  
wel in health, bursting forth into words of praise.  
And furthermore he incited those of the Clergie,  
and all the people that were come to that place,  
with gladsonnesse & ioy of minde, to render due  
praises and thanks vnto God, and blessed Saint  
*Francis*.

In like manner one *Gerlandinus* by name, a yong

man



man that was borne at *Regusa*, goeing forth to the vineyarde, aboute the time of gathering grapes, and standing vnder the wine presse in the vessale that receaued the wine; to fil the bottles: sodeinly a sorte of exceeding great stones, being driven vpon him by the fal of certaine wood piles thereabouts, did buise & batter his head, to presēt death whervpon his father did presently make hast vnto him, & dispairing of his sonne, as being vtterly overthrowen & lost, did not goe about to help him: but vnder the burden, as he fel; soe vnder the same he left him. The labourers also of the vineyarde came running speedily vnto the place, hearing a mournefull voice, of a great clamour, and ioyning in greate sorrowe with the Father for the youthe, did drawe him out, being now perfectly dead with the fall. But his Father casting himselfe at the feete of *Iesus*, did make his humble praiers vnto him, that through the merittes of *Saint Francis*, whose solemne feast was euen then at hand, he would vouchsafe to restore vnto him his sonne againe. These his praiers he redoubled, and vowed offices of pietie: promising, himselfe with his sonne, (if he might be raised vp from death) to visite the bodie of the holy man. Now see the marveilous effect. By & by the youthe, who had binne miserably bruised al his body over, being restored to life and perfect strength, did ioyfully rise vp before them all: blaming them that lamented for him, and therewithall, avowing himselfe to haue reobtained his life, by the suffrages of *Saint Francis*.

Another dead man also he raised in *Almany*,

*The sonne  
is raised  
fro death  
to life  
while the  
Father  
doth vowe  
to visit the  
body of  
B. Saint  
Francis*



whereof our Lord the Pope. Pope Gregory, did at the time of the translation of the blessed Sainte, to the great ioy of all the brethren that were assembled to the translation and generall Chapter, by his letters Apostolique, giue certaine knowledge, vnto them. The course of this miracle, because I doe not knowe I haue not committed to writing: beleiving the Papall testimony, to be better than any other instrument of asseveration, whatsoeuer.

### THE THIRD DIVISION.

*Of such as be deliuered from the perrill  
of death.*

**I**N the Confinnes of the Cittie (of Rome) a certaine noble man named *Raphe* did with his deuoute wife, entertaine the Friars Minors, in his house: as well in regarde of hospitalitie, as for the loue and reverence, of Saint Francis. But that very night, the keeper of the house sleeping vpon the toppe of a Tower, and lying vpon a pile of wood, that was placed vpon the very edge of the wall: it chanced that the same being not well laied together: did slide of from the place, whereby he fell vpon the vnder rofe of the house, & from thence downe, vpon the ground. At the sound of which fall, the whole familie being raised; and knowledge being also had, of the house keepers fall, the maister and mistresse of the house, together with the brethren, did hastily runne to the place. But he who had fallen from a losse, was wholly possessed



sed with soe sounde a sleepe, that neither at the ratling, of the double downefall: nor yet at the noyle of the familie that came with clamor roude aboute him, he did awake. Yet being at the length enforced to wake, by the hands of them, that halled and iogged him; he began to complaine, that he had bin put out of a sweete & quiet rest: saying that he had sweetely slept, betweene the armes of Saint Francis. But being by the rest informed, of his owne fall, & seeing himself to be vpon the ground who had lien on highe, before with wonder and amazement of minde, that a thing should so be donne: which he had not perceived, while it was a doeing; he promised before them all, that he would doe pennance, for the reverence of God and of Saint Francis.

In a towne called *Pophis*, which is with in the partes of *Campania*, a certaine Priest named *Thomas* went to reparaire a mill, which belonged vnto the Church. And walking somewhat lesse carefully about the edge of the trough, from whence a deepe streame, did fall downe with a strong and violent follow; he fell by a sodeyne chance, into a hollow peice of wood: by motion whereof the mill was set a goeing. As therefore he lay incompassed and restrained, within that peice of wood, and the course of the waters ceased not to streame over his mouth, because he lay with his face vpward: not being able to speake with his tongue, he did with his harte, lamentably call vpon Saint Francis. But lieng soe for a greate while, in soe much that his life was dispaired of, by al his cōpanions, they

*A certaine Priest is delivered from manifest danger of death by the inuocating of Saint Francis.*



did at length with great violence, remoue the mill to the contrary side. Whereby, the Prieste being cast out of that hollowe peice of wood, was tumbled, in the chanell of the water: panting & breathing for life. And even then, behoulde a cerraine Friar Minor, apparelled in a pure white garment, and girt with a Rope; taking holde of him with great sweetenesse, did pull him out of the river: saieing: I am *Francis*, whom thou didest call vpon. But he, being in this waies delivered from that daunger, was marveilously astonished, and being desirouse to haue kissed his footestepps, rāne carefully vp and downe, inquiring of his companions. Where is he? Whither went the Sainte: Which way departed he. And the men that were with him, being full of feare, did fall downe prostrate, vpon the ground, extolling the great wonders, of the high God, and the prevalent meritts, of his humble Seruant.

Certaine youtnes of the towne of *Celanum*, went forthe vpon a time to mowe grasse in the meadowes, wherein was an old hidden well covered over at the toppe with diuers kindes of greene hearbes, the which contained about some fower yardes depth of water, with in it. And it fortunēd that as the boyes did severally runne diuers waies, over the meadowe, one of them at vnawares rāne into the well. But as his bodie was even then instantly falling, into that deepe pitte: the heedefulnes of his minde, had recourse alofte, to the helpe of Saint *Francis*, crying out, in that very fall, both faithfully & confidently, o Saint *Francis*, helpe me.

The



The rest of the boies in the meane while, turning themselves about, one, one way, and one another and not finding him, among them, with clamour, travell, and teares, did goe to seeke him. And having found at lengthe, that he was fallen, into the well, they hastily with greife, retourned into the towne, declaring the event, and craving helpe. But retourning backe againe to the place, with greate company of men, one being lette downe by a rope into the wel, did see the boy, sitting vpon the rope of the water, not having suffered, any manner of hurte, at all. But the boy being pulled out of the wel, did say vnto them al, that were present: When I sodainely fel downe I invocated the patronadge of Saint *Francis*: who was immediatly present with me, even in my fall, and reaching forth his hande did lightly take holde of me, neither did he ever leaue me, vntill that now, together with you, he ledde me out of the well againe.

In the Church of Saint *Francis*; at *Assisum*, while the Bishoppe of Hostia ( who afterwarde was Pope, *Alexander* ) did preache, before the Court of *Rome*, A certaine great and waightie stone: being vnadvisedly left vpon the pulpite, which was both highe, and all of stonne; and being over much forced, with leaning vpon it, did fall vpon the head of a woman that satte thereby. Wherevpon the people about her, esteeming her to be perfectly dead; and her head to be bruised, altogether; did cover her, with a garment of her owne; that after the ende of the Sermon, shee might be had out of the Church, as a lamentable

A boy being  
fallne  
into a well  
at the in-  
vocation  
of Saint  
Francis is  
drawne  
out of it  
without  
harme.



Coarse, to be prepared for buriall. But she faithfully commended her selfe vnto Saint Francis, before whose Altar Shee lay. And behold, as soone as the Sermon was donne, the woman rose vp before them all, so well in health; that there appeared in her, no signe of any hurt at all, yea, and which is more to be admired: whereas shee had binne for long time together, even vntill that very hower afflicted, with a continuall paine in her head; shee was from that time forward, quite and cleane delivered, from all molestation of that disease according as her selfe avowed afterwards.

At Cornetum, in a place of the brethren, whether divers devout persons, one time resorted to the casting of a bell; a certaine yong boy of eighte yeares oulde, whose name was Bartholomewe, brought some kinde of present, vnto the labouring brethren. At what time, sodeinly a great & vehement winde, shaking the whole house, did with so violent a force, throw downe the doore of the gate (which was both very great, and exceeding heauie) ypon the boy, that, with the greatnesse of the waight, he was verely thought, to haue binne crushed; to death. For he was so wholly covered and buried (as it were) therevnder, that no part of him, could outwardly be seene. They therefore that were present, did al of them runne together, calling for the mightie help of Saint Francis. And his Father also, who for the numnesse of his members, by reason of sorrowe, was not able to moue himselfe, out of the place, did yet by inwarde vowes, and outwarde voice, of-

Behold  
more mi-  
seracles  
donne by



fer his sonne to Saint Francis, Well: they at the length remooued that deadely waighte, from ouer the boy. And behoulde, he, whom they thought to haue bin deade, did, as one awaked out of a sleepe, in cheareful manner appeare before them, hauing no manner of shewe, of any hurte, aboute him. He therefore, as soone as he was fowerteene yeares olde, became a Frier minor, growing afterwarde to be a learned man, and a famouse preacher, in the order.

The men of Lentinum, had hewen an exceeding greate stone, out of the mountaine, the which was to be put vnder an alter of a Church of S. Francis, that was shortly to be consecrated. But whereas (wel nighe) forty men indeauoured often times to put it into a carte, it fel at the length vpon a certaine man, and couered him in manner of a graue. Wherevpon, the men being confused in minde, and not knowing what to doe, the greater parte, of them departed away, without hope of helpe. But tenne of the men, that remained behinde, invoking S. Francis, with mourneful voice, and desiring him not to suffer a man, soe horriblie to dye in his seruice, taking at length good harte vnto them, did with so great a facilitie, remoue the stone, that no man might doubt, but that the power of Saint Francis, was present amongst them. The man finally rose vp strong and sounde, in all his members: and more ouer he obtained; the cleare and perfect sighte, of his eies, which had bin before, duskish and obscured: that so all men might be geuen to vnderstand, of howe

in vocating  
the holy  
Father  
S. Francis.

St. Bonaventura

effica-



quithout ai  
glod sit  
vndin  
2. Francis

efficacious & preualent power, the merittes of *S. Francis* be, even in desperate & hopelesse accidents. The very like happened at *Saint Severines*, in the Marquisate of *Ancona*. For, as a greate stone being brought from *Constantnople*, vnto a Church of *S. Francis*, was drawen along, by the strength of many men, it fell most terribly, vpon one of them, that drewe it. And whereas it was generally believed, that he was not only dead, but was also broken and crushed to pieces: by the helpe of *Saint Francis*, who lifted vppe the stone, he casting of the waight thereof, did leape vppe safe and sounde, without any hurte at all.

One *Bartholomewe* also, a Cittizen of *Caieta*, labouring not a litle, in the building of a certaine Church of *Saint Francis* by meane of a certaine beame that having binne but slightly set, did fall and light vppon his neck, was therewithal grievously bruised. Wherevpon, being even now ready to die, he as he was a faithfull and Godly person, craved of one of the brethren, his voyage provision. The which for soe much as it was not in the brothers power, so sodeinly to bring vnto him, he therefore considering that he was thought to be, in very present danger of death: vsed vnto him the worde of *Saint Augustine*, saying *believe and thou hast eaten*. But in the night following *Saint Francis*, with eleven brothers in his company appeared vnto him: and bearing a little Lambe vpon his brest, did come vnto his bed side, calling him by his name, and saying vnto him, *Bartholomewe*, doe not feare because the ene-



my, who would haue hindred thee in my service, shall not preuaile against thee: Loe, heere is the Lambe, which thou diddest craue, to haue ben given vnto thee; whom also, in regarde of thy good desire, thou hast receaved: by whose power thou shalt obtaine, the perfect welfare, both of thy soule, and body. And so drawing his hād, along over the woundes; he willed him to returne, vnto the worke he had taken in hand. Who rising vp therefore, very timely in the morning; and presenting himselfe sounde and well, before them that had left him, even at deathes doore, did bring vppon them, both wonder and amazement. And furthermore, he stirred vppe their mindes, vnto the reverence and loue, of the blessed Father, as wel by his owne example, as by the miracle of the Saint.

A certaine man also of the towne of Cephernam; named *Nicholas*, did fall one day into the handes of his mercilesse enemies: who in the fiercenesse of their savadge cruelty, heaping woundes after woundes, in great store vpon him, did in so excessive a degree exercise their fury, vpon the miserable man, that they took him either to be dead outright, or at the least to be vpon the very point of death. But the same *Nicholas*, when he receaved the first blowes, did with a loude voice call vpon Saint *Francis*, saying: O Saint *Francis*, defend me, O Saint *Francis*, helpe me. And this voice, diuers heard a great way off, although they were not able to relieue him. But being carried home at length, and begoased, in his owne blood, he confidentlie

Here one  
which doth  
invo cate  
the Saint  
is deliue-  
red from  
danger of  
death.



avouched, that he should nor see death by means of those woundes: nor yet that he did even then feele, any paine of them: for that Saint *Francis*, had succoured him, and had obtained of God, for him, time to doe penance in. Which the event ensuing, confirmed. For being washed from the bloud, he was forthwith (beiond all humane hope) clarely delivered.

. Also a certain noble mans sonne, in the towne of Saint *Geminianus*, being taken with a grievous sicknesse, and past hope, of any better recoverie was finally brought, vnto the very exigent and point of death. For a streame of bloud yssued forth of his eyes, as it is commonly seene to do, out of a vaine, in the arme. And by other vndoubted tokens also, of death approaching, as appeared, in the other partes of his body, he was of al men iudged, & reputed for a dead mā. As also, being in regard, of the weakenesse of his spirit and strength deprived of the vse of his sence & motion, he seemed to be already departed. His parents therefore and frinds, being gathered together (as the custome is) in way of lamentation: and thinking of no other thing, but of his buriall, his Father, yet conceaving hope in our Lord ranne speedily vnto the Church of Saint *Francis*: which was built in the same towne: and hanging a girdle about his necke, did with all humility, prostrate himselfe, vpon the earth, and soe, making his vowes, and multiplying his praiers, did with sighes and groanes, obtaine of Christ, to haue Saint *Francis*, to be his Patrone. He therefore returning, straight

Heere we  
may see  
the Saints



waies vnto his sonne, and finding, him to be restored, to health againe: chaunged his former Mourning, into ioye, and exultation.

The very like also our Lord vouchsafed, by the merittes of his Saint, to worke vpon a certaine girle of a village named *Thamaret*, in *Cathalonia*, and vpon another of *Antona*: who both of them being by the violence of their sicknesse, in present daunger of death, and Saint Francis, being of their parents faithfully invocated, in their behalfe were presently restored, to perfect health.

A certaine Clarke named *Mathewe*, dwelling in the streete called *Albus*, having druncken, a deadly poison, was so grievously oppressed, therewithall, that being no waies able to speake, he looked for nothing, but the ende of his life. And even then, a Priest that was present, admonishing him, to make his confession, was not able, to extorte from him, soe much as a worde. But he in his hart, humbly besought, our Saviour Christ that by the merittes of Saint Francis, he would vouchsafe to deliver him, from the iawes of death. And as soone, as having receaued strenght frō God he had with faithful deuotion, vttered the name of S. Francis, vomiting vp the poison (as was testified, by them that were present) he rendered thanks vnto him, by whom he had binne delivered,

*to assiste  
as patrons  
before our  
Lord Iesus  
Christ those  
which are  
devout vnto  
them*

*S. Francis  
being faith  
fully invo  
cated doth  
forthwith  
restore  
health to  
two which  
were sicke.*



THE FOURTH DIVISION  
Of persons, that were saved from  
shippewracks

CERTAIN Marriners being some tenne miles distant from the Haven of Barulum, and in great danger of the Sea, by reason of a tempest, that increased, more and more, vpon them, and being now in doubt of their lives, did cast downe their anchor. But the spiritte of stormes, making the Sea, yet more outragiously to swell, their Cables therewithall were broken, and their anchors lost, whereby they wandered vpon the Sea, by an vncertaine & vnequal course. But yet at length, the Sea, being by Gods providence, brought to a Calme, they bent their whole endeavours, to recover their anchors, whose Cables lay floting, aboue the water. And not being able, by their owne strength and industrie, to accomplishe their desires, invoking the helpe of many of the Saintes and bestowing also therewithall much labour and paine; they could not yet in a whole daies space, recover one. But one Marriner among the rest, whose name was *Perfectus*, though in his conditions he were very vnperfect; did in a kinde of scoffing manner, say thus vnto his companions; Loe, you haue already invocated, the help of al the saints, and there is not one (as you see) who hath releived, our needes. Let vs now therefore call vpon this same *Francis*, who is

a new



a new pettie faint if hapely he can cōvey himselfe into the bottome of the waters, and restore our anchors, vnto vs. Herevnto, the rest of them, all agreed: howbeit not in scoffing manner, but truly and sincerely consenting, vnto the perswasion of *Perseffus*: and blaming his reproachful worde, they established with the Sainte, a voluntary and vnfaigned vowe. Wherevpon immediately, even in a very momēt, without any manner of help at al, the anchors did swimme vpon the waters, as though the nature of iron, had bin changed into the lightnesse of a peice of wood.

A certaine traveller, being sicke and weake in bodie, by reason of the euill consequences, of a sharpe ague, which he had but a litle before sustained; did come in a certaine shippe, from the partes beyond the Seas. But this man did beare an exceeding great devotion, towarde Saint *Francis*, whom he had chosen to be his advocate, with the King of Heaven. And being not yet perfectly free from the disease, whereas he was one time distressed, with a very greate thirste, not having nowe any water left to drinke, he beganne with a loude voice, to say; Go confidently: and draw me a cuppe of water because Saint *Francis*, hath alreadie filled my litle vessell, with water. It is a wonder, verely. They founde the vessell indeede, filled vp with water, which had binne before, left voided, and emptie. But vpon another day, when the shippe was almost covered with waves, in a sodaine tempest, and was soe tossed and beaten with violent stormes, that they did all of them stand in present

Heere the  
hereticke  
may see  
howe cer-  
taine Mar-  
riners ma-  
kinge a  
vowe to S.  
*Francis* are  
harde of  
the Saint  
Why then  
doe they  
scoffe at  
Vowes.  
Beholde  
heere a pil-  
grimage  
vndertake  
in honour  
of Saint  
*Francis*.



feare of shippewracke, the same sicke man, began with a sodeine crie, to call vpon them al that were in the shippe, saying: Arise everie one and goe to meete Saint *Francis*, who is comming towards vs: For beholde, he is heere present to save vs. And soe with a great voice, and also with teares falling downe vpon his face, he did his reverence. And presently, at the sighte of the Sainte, the sicke man resumed his former healthe, and the calme of the Sea, forthwith ensued.

Brother *James* of *Reate*, passing over a certaine River, with some other of his brethren, in a little Barke, so soone as those his brethren, were landed vpon the shoare, did last of all prepare himselfe, to come forth. But that litle boate, being by misfortune, beaten backe, the Governour thereof, was forced to swimme, and the brother was plunged, into the bottome, of the water. The brethren therfore that stood on lande, did with affectuous praiers, call vpon Saint *Francis*: with teares and sighes beseeching him, to succour his childe, in this distresse. But the overwhelmed brother, not being able to speake with his mouthe, did yet in such sorte as he could, from the bottome of that huge and mightie gulfe, crie out in harte, & craue the help, of his pittifull and compassionate Father. And by help of the presence, of the blessed Father, he walked along the deepe, as if it had bin, vpon the drie land: and taking hold, of the drowned Barke, did bring it with him, vnto the shore. It is a marveilous thing, to speake. His garments were not soe much as wette: nor yet did any drop of

water



water take holde vpon his Coate.

A brother named *Bonaventure*, sailing with two men in his cōpany, over a certaine lake, by reason of the vessell, which was partely broken: and of the surges of the water, that came powring therinto, abundantly, was with the shippe, & the rest that were in it, swallowed vp, into the bottome of that deepe water. But they having (with greate hope and confidence) out of that lake of miserie, invocated the mercifull Father Saint Francis, the vessel, though ful of water, sodeinly sailed aboue the water. And did by the guide & conduct of the holy Sainte, bring them with safetie, vnto the shoare. Soe also another brother of *Esculum*, being fallen vnder water, in a River, was by the meritte of Saint Francis, delivered. And in the lake of *Reate*, certaine men and women, being in the like perril, did, at the invocation of the name of Saint Francis, safely escape, out of the daūgerouse shippewracke of many waters.

Certaine Marriners of *Ancona*, being tossed with a perilouse tempest, perceaved themselves to be in present daūger, of drowing. But as they, in this desperate case of their liues, humbly called vpon Saint Francis, a great lighte appeared vpon the Sea: and together with that lighte a calme was from Heaven vouchsafed, as if the blessed man had bin able, by a marveilouse power, to commaunde the windes, and the Sea. With how greate and wondrous Miracles, the blessed Father both was, and yet is, made famous vpon the Sea, & how often he hath there, giuen help, vnto such as were

*Behold a wonderful thinge which doth followe at the invocation of Saint Francis.*

*S. Francis beinge invocated doth deliver many from danger of drowninge.*

*See howe great thinges the B. Saint doth effect after his death.*



voide of hope, I thinke it impossible, to rehearse particularly. Neither is it to be wondered at, if he now raignening in Heaven, haue power graunted vnto him, over the waters, vnto whom, conuersing in this our mortalitie, euerie living creature, being confirmed vnto the originall, of his creation, did yealde, a marveilouse kinde of service.

### THE FIFTH DIVISION.

*Of persons deliuered out of bonds and imprisonment.*

**I**T chaunced in *Romania*, that a *Gracien* being servant vnto a certaine man, was vniustly accused of thefte: whom for that cause, the Lord of the land commanded, to be kept in a straichte prison and heavily loaden, with irons. But the lady of the house, having compassion vpon her servant, whom shee vndoubtedly beleived to be innocent of the crime, whereof he was accused, made instant request vnto her husband, for his deliverance. But whereas he, out of the obstinate hardenesse of his hart, refused to cōsent vnto her, The lady made her humble recourse, vnto *s. Francis*, vnto his piety by her petition cōmending the Innocēt. Wherevpon the helper of the distressed, was present forthwith, and mercifully visited, the poore man that was cast in prison. He vnloosed his bandes, he broke vp the prison, and taking the Innocēt man by the hand, he ledde him forth, and saied vnto him: I am he vnto whom, thy Lady hath devoutly

*One which was captive being commēded by vowe to s. Francis is forthwith miraculously deliuered.*



commended thee. And whereas he was stricken, with a great feare, in his minde, and wandered aboute, to finde away of passadge downe, from the top of that steepe rocke, he sodeinly finding himselfe to be (by the power of him, that had enlarged him) vpon the plaine ground, returned vnto his Lady. And relating vnto her in order, the truth of the miracle, he yet further inflamed the deuoute Lady, vnto the loue of Christ, and to the reverence of his servant, Saint Francis.

In a place called *Massa S. Petri*, there was a poore man, that ought a peice of mony, vnto a certaine souldier, who though he were soe exceding poore that he had not wherwithal, to pay him, yet being one day, sodeinly surprised, by his creditor, did humbly beseech him, to haue compassion vpon him, craving a time of respite, for the loue of Saint Francis. But the proude warriour, despised the petitions that were offered vnto him, and as a vaine and idle thing, lightly esteemed, the loue of the Sainte. For making a perverse and preposterouse answere vnto him, I wil (saied he) shutte thee vp, in such a place, and I will mure thee vp in such a manner of prison, that neither Saint Francis, nor any body els shalbe able to helpe thee. And he put his worde in practise. For he founde out an obscure and darke prison, whereinto he cast the man with fetters vpon him. But a litle after, came Saint Francis: who breaking vp the prison, and riving the fetters a sunder, did bring the man harmelesse home to his owne againe. And soe the mighty power of Saint Francis, having disappointed the



proude souldier; delivered the Captiue frō harme, who had committed himselfe vnto him: yea and did, by an admirable miracle chaunge, the contumacie of that soulder, into mildenes and good conformitie.

Consider  
these things  
thou which  
saiest that  
Saints can  
doe no-  
thing af-  
ter their  
death.

In like manner one *Albertus Aretium*, being kept in harde and cruell bandes, for certaine debts that were vniustly demaunded of him; did humbly commend his innocencie, vnto Saint *Francis*. For he did loue the Order, of the Friars Minors, exceedingly: and did reuerence Saint *Francis*, amōg all the Saintes, with an especiall affection. But his Creditor saied, with a blasphemouse mouth vnto him; that neither Saint *Francis*, nor God himselfe could be able; to deliver him out of his handes. Thus therefore, vpon the Vigill of Saint *Francis*, it came to passe; that whereas this prisoner had eaten nothing all that day, but had given his diette vnto another poore man, for the loue of the Sainte; in the night following, Saint *Francis*, appeared vnto him, as he lay awake, at whose entraunce in his fetters were loosed from his feete, and his chaines fell downe from his handes; the doores also were opened of themselves, the tables fell downe in the place, and the man departing free, returned home to his owne. And from thenceforthe, he fulfilled his vowe; observing to fast, the vigil of Saint *Francis*: and over adding vnto the taper of waxe, which he accustomed yearely to offer; an ounce: of increase in signe of his increasing devotion.

When Pope *Gregory* the ninthe, sate in the seate of Saint *Peter*, one *Peter* also by name, an inhabitant

of



of the Cittie called *Alisia*, being accused of here-  
 sie, was taken at *Rome*: and was by the commaun-  
 dement of the same supreame Bishoppe, commit-  
 ted to the custody, of the Bishoppe of *Tibur*, to be  
 by him kept forthe comming, vpon paine of the  
 losse, of his Bishoppricke. Whom therfore he cau-  
 sed to be put in irons, and to shutte vp in a darke  
 prison, that he might haue no meane to escape: gi-  
 ving vnto him bread, by waight, and drinke, by  
 measure. But now did the man beginne, with great  
 store both of praiers and teares, to call vpon Saint  
*Francis*, to haue compassion vpon him: because he  
 had heard, that the vigil of his solemne feaste, was  
 presently now at hand. And for so much as, he had  
 by the puritie of faithe, alreadie renounced, all er-  
 ror of hereticall impietie, and had withall the de-  
 uotion of his harte adheared, vnto the most faith-  
 full seruaunte of Christ, Saint *Francis*, he obtained  
 by the intercession of his merrittes, to be hearde  
 at the handes, of our Lord. For the nighte before  
 his festiuitie, about the twilighte of the evening,  
 Saint *Francis*, taking cōpassion, came downe into  
 the prison, vnto him: and calling him by his name,  
 did commande him, forthwith to rise. Who being  
 stricken with feare, and asking who it was, did per-  
 ceauie that Saint *Francis* was present. And behol-  
 ding the fetters of his feete, to lie broken before  
 him, the doores of the prison to be opened, by rea-  
 son that the very nailes flewe out of themselves,  
 yea and a plaine way, to be prepared for his depar-  
 ture, and all this to be donne, by force of the pre-  
 sence of the Sainte; albeit that he were sette at li-

*Saint  
 Francis  
 being in vo-  
 cated with  
 prayers &  
 teares doth  
 by miracle  
 free one  
 out of pri-  
 son.*



bertie, yet was he soe amazed, that he could not finde the way to departe, but making a noyse at the gate, terrified all his keepers. Who making reporte vnto the Bishoppe, of his deliverie, from imprisonment, the Bishoppe himselfe, after vnderstanding had, of the order and course of the matter, came with devotion vnto the prison, and manifestly knowing, the power of God: adored our Lord, in that place. The bondes also and fetters, were brought before our Lord the Pope, and the Cardinalls all, that were present: who seing what had binne donne, and admiring the same, exceedingly, gaue honour, and praise, vnto God.

One *Guidolotus* of Saint *Geminianus*, being falsely accused of killing a certaine man, with poyson, and that by the same manner of death, he would also haue destroied his sonne, & all his familie, was therefore apprehended, by the Governour of the lande, by whose commaundement, he was loaden with irons, and straightly imprisoned, in a certaine Tower. But he having hope in our Lord, by reason of his innocencie, which he knewe in his owne harte, comended his cause, to the defence, of Saint *Francis*, his patronadge. But while the Governoure was thinking with himselfe, by what manner of torment, he might make him confesse, the objected crime, & further with what paines, he might after such confession, finally put him to death, the poore man, being the nexte morning to be brought to his torments, was visited that very night, with the presence of Saint *Francis*: and being vntil the morning, incopassed with a great  
bright-



brightnesse of lighte, & being also filled with ioy, & much confidence also of minde, he receaved security of his escape. But in the morning the tormentors came about him: they ledde him out of the prison: they hung him vpon the torture: and increased vpon him, many and sundrie waights of iron. He was oftentimes, lette downe, and lifted vp againe: that by the succeding of one paine, after another, he might be the sooner inforced, to confesse the crime: but by the spiritte of his innocencie, he retained a chearefullnesse in his countenance, making no shewe of sadnesse, in all those paines. Yet after this, a great fier was made beneath him, but not soe much as one of his heares was thereby perished, though he hung with his head to the grounde. And last of all, being scalded all over his bodie, with boiling oyle, by vertue of his patrone, to whose defence, he had commended himselfe, overcoming all these things, he went away safe, and free from harme.

THE SIXTE DIVISION

*Of women deliuered, from daunger,  
in Childbirth.*

**A** certaine Countesse in *Selanonia*, no lesse vertuous in conversation, than highe, in honorable degree & condition, did beate towards Saint Francis, an exceeding great devotion: and towards the brethren an industriouse affection of pietie. But she, suffering one time, in her travel of childe,



A certaine  
Woman  
being hel-  
ped by S.  
Francis in  
the danger  
of child-  
birth doth  
after-  
wards per-  
forme her  
vowe and  
build a  
Church in  
his honor.

exceeding sharpe, and dolorouse paines, was brought vnto that extremitie, of distresse, that the future birthe of the childe, seemed likely in all expectation, to be the present death, of the Mother. For it seemed impossible, that the childe should be borne, with life; vnlesse that shee thereby, should ende her life: and should by such a deliverie, not bring forth, but perrish. But then shee bethought her selfe, of Saint *Francis*, his fame; of his vertue, and glory: her faith, was stirred vp; her devotion was inflamed. Shee turned her selfe, vnto his efficacious helpe, vnto him, as vnto a true frind, as vnto a solace, of the deuoute, as vnto a refuge, of the afflicted. O Saint *Francis* (quoth shee) vnto thy pietie, al the bones of my body, make humble supplication: and I vow, in minde, what I cannot expresse, in wordes. And marveilouse was the speede of his pietie. The ende of her speaking, was the ende, of her lamenting: the bounde, of her travell, the beginning of her childe bearing. For presently her labours being all at an end, shee did with safetie, bring forth the her childe. And afterwardes, shee was not vnmindefull of her vow, nor yet refractorie, from her wel intended purpose. For shee caused, a goodly Church to be builte: and the same being builte, and finished, shee assigned vnto the brethren, in honour of the holy Sainte.

In the parts aboute *Rome*, there was a certaine woman, named *Beatrice*, who looked now shortely to be brought a bed, of a childe: but having borne it deade, by mischaunce, for fower daies space in her wombe, shee miserablie sustained, many and

fundrie,



sundrie, torments: and was distressed with dolorous paines, even to the pointe, of deathe. For the dead issue, constrained the mother to deathe: and the abortiue, being not yet brought to light, enforced the apparant perrill and danger, of the Mother. Shee tried the helpe of the Physitians. But by whatsoever humane helpe, shee laboured: it proved, all in vaine. And soe of the first maledictions, some parte did plentifully befall vpon this miserable woman, that being made the graue and Sepulcher, of her owne conception, she was for certaine to expect, a graue for her selfe, immediately. But shee at the length, with all her devotion, committing her selfe, by message, vnto the Friers Minors, did with great faith, humbly craue to haue somewhat of the Reliques, of Saint Francis. And it happened (by Gods providence) that there was founde, a certaine peice of a corde, wherewith the holy man, had binne sometime girded. The which so soone as it was put, vpon the mournesfull woman, most easely, forthwith removed, all paine and dolour, quite away, & the dead childe, which was the cause of her danger, being now brought forth shee was perfectly restored, vnto her former health.

A certaine noble mans wife of *Narnum*, named *Iuliana*, passed her yeares, in sorrow and heavinesse for the death of her sundrie sonnes, and did continually bewaile, her vnhappy misfortune, concerning them: in regard that all that euer she had, with greate paine and labour, brought into the world, she did (in shorte space) with farre greater

Gen. 3. 16.

See heere  
howe parte  
of the  
girdle of  
S. Francis  
being ap-  
plied to a  
woman  
doth deli-  
uer her fro  
danger of  
death.



sorrowe, commit to buriall. But bearing one time  
 in her wombe, a childe of fower monethes con-  
 ception, and being, by reason of the former events  
 more afflicted in minde, concerning the deathe,  
 than concerning the birth of the childe, she faith-  
 fully praied, vnto the blessed Father Saint *Francis*,  
 for the life, of the childe that was yet vnborne.  
 And beholde, one night as shee lay at rest, a cer-  
 taine woman appeared in sleepe vnto her; holding  
 a goodly boy, in her handes, and offering him, in  
 most chearefull manner, vnto her. But whereas  
 shee refused to receaue, him whom shee feared  
 foorthwith to loose againe; the woman yet fur-  
 ther, in this māner of wise replied, saying: receaue  
 him securely: for he, whom Saint *Francis* (bearing  
 compassion with thee, in thy grieffe) doth send  
 vnto thee, shall be sure to liue and shal continue  
 in perfect healthe. And presently the woman awa-  
 king, did wel vnderstād, by this vision, frō heauen  
 vouchesafed vnto her; that the suffrage of S. *Francis*,  
 was readie, to helpe her. From thenceforthe, ther-  
 fore, shee being more abundantly filled with ioy,  
 did for obtaining the Issue, which was promised  
 vnto her, offer vp many praiers, and did also make  
 sundry vowes. But the time of her childebirth be-  
 ing come at length, the woman brought forthe a  
 male Childe: who flourishing in the lustinesse of  
 his youthfull yeares, as having by the merittes of  
 Saint *Francis*, receaued the sustinance of his life,  
 did giue vnto his parents, a provocation and fur-  
 ther encouragement, of more deuoute affection  
 towarde Christ, and to his blessed Sainte. The like

Here two  
 women  
 praye  
 vnto Saint  
 Francis for  
 helpe are  
 both of the  
 beards.

also



also vnto this, the holy father effected, in the Citty of *Tibur*. For a certaine woman, having brought forth many daughters, and being now wearied with desire, of male issue, did make vnto S. Francis, many praiers and vowes. Shee therefore, by his meritts, conceived of Childe: and he, who had been praied vnto but for one, graunted vnto her to bring forth two sonnes at once.

At *Piterbium*, a woman greate with childe, and nigh her time, was by the iudgemēt of al, thought to be much more nigh vnto deathe, by reason of the extreame torments, shee felt in her bodie, and other such like lamentable distresses, incident vnto womens misfortunes. And when the strength and force of nature, had soe failed, that all industrie of humane arte, failed also, therewithall, by invoking the name of Saint Francis, the woman was presently delivered, from her paines; and safely brought forth her childe. But shee having obtained, what her selfe desired; and being ynmindfull of the benefitte, shee had receaved; did not giue due honour, vnto the Sainte; but did on the day, of his solemnitie, put forth her handes, to servile workes. And behold her right arme being stretched out vnto labour, became sodeinly drie and stiffe, and not to be bended. The which, when she with the other arme, endeavoured to pull backe vnto her; it also, did with like revenge, wither forthwith. The woman therefore, being stricken with the feare of Gods punishment; did make her vow anew: and whereas, in regard of her ingratitude, & contempt, shee had lost the vse of her mē-

Behold  
beere howe  
an yngrat-  
full womā  
is punished  
for not ho-  
nouringe  
the Saint  
yet after-  
wards be-  
ing penitēt  
and vow-  
inge a-  
gaine vnto  
the Saint  
by his me-  
rits is deli-  
uered.



bers, shee obtained, by the merittes, of the mercifull, and humble Sainte vnto whom shee had now secondly, vowed her selfe; to recover, the same againe.

*A woman  
which was  
readie to  
dye pray-  
inge vnto  
S. Francis,  
for helpe  
and ma-  
kinge a  
vowe is  
miracu-  
lously freed  
fro death.*

A certaine woman dwelling in the partes about *Aretium*, having for seaven daies space together, sustained most greivouse and daungerouse paines in her travell of Childe, in so much that her fleshe was at length discouloured, and turned to blacke, being now dispaired, of at all hands, did make a vow, to Saint *Francis*, and beganne, at the very instant and pointe of death, to invoke his aide and helpe. But as soone as her vow was made; shee speedily fell a sleepe, & therein sawe, blessed Saint *Francis*, sweetely speaking vnto her, and demaunding of her, if shee knewe his face, and could, to the honour of the gloriouse Virgin, say by harte, that Antheme of hers, which beginneth with these wordes, *All haile Queene of mercie*. Whervnto, shee making answere, that shee had knowledg of bothe: Beginne then, saied the Sainte, that sacred Antheme: and before it shall be fully ended, thou shalt with safetie, bring forth thy childe. At this voice, the woman awaked, and beganne with feare to say that Antheme, *All haile Queene of mercie*. And when she therein called after, those mercifull cies, and mentioned, the fruite, of the Virgins wombe, being presently delivered, from all her dolours and paines, she ioyfully brought forth a goodly boy: rendring thanks, vnto the Queene of mercie, who by the merittes of Saint *Francis*, had vouchesafed to haue mercie, on her.



## THE SEVENTH DIVISION.

*Of giving sight vnto the blinde.*

**I**N the Covent of the Friars Minors, at *Naples*, a certaine brother named *Robert*, having binne blinde, for many yeares together, there grew at length vpon his eies, a superfluous peice of fleshe, which hindered the motion and vse, of his eye liddes. At one time therefore, when the brethren of foraine places, being to goe into diuers partes of the world, did in great numbers, assemble wether, the blessed Father *Saint Francis*, the lively patterne and mirrour, of holy Obedience, that by the novelty of a miracle; he might the rather exhorthe the vnto their iorney, did cure the foresaid brother *Robert*, during the time of their abode, there in manner heereafter following. One night the same brother *Robert*, lay sicke in soe great daunger, of death, that they had alreadie saied for him, the commendations of his soule: and even then stood by him the holy father, accompanied with three brethren of greate perfection in all manner of holinesse: namely *Saint Anthony*, brother *Augustine*, and brother *James*, of *Assisum*: who, as they had perfectly immitated him, in the time of their life, so did they chearefully also, follow him, after their death but *Saint Francis* taking a kinfe, did cut of, the superfluous peice of fleshe, did restore vnto him, his former sight, and reduced him, euen from the very iawes of deathe: and therewithall, he saied vnto

him,

Thou knowest that  
which  
Saints can  
doe nothing after  
their death  
see what  
beere doth  
happen.



*Heere we  
 may note  
 how the  
 euen of  
 Saint Frā-  
 cis is fasted  
 in bread  
 and water  
 only howe  
 the body of  
 our Sau-  
 our Christ  
 is eleuated  
 in the  
 Masse. As  
 also that  
 the holy  
 Eucharist  
 is to be a-  
 dored as a  
 wonderful  
 Sacrament  
 and as the  
 true & li-  
 uinge light  
 of our  
 soules.  
 We may  
 note also a  
 miracle  
 which doth  
 happen in*

him, my sonne *Robert*, the grace which I haue wrought with thee, is a signe vnto the brethren, who travell into farre Countries, that I will goe before them, and will direct their waies. Let them therefore ioyfully goe on (saied he) and let them with a chearefull minde accomplish, the obedi-  
 ence enioyned vnto them.

At a place called *Thebes* in *Romanie*, a certaine blinde woman hauing fasted the vigil of Saint Francis, with bread and water; was brought by her husband, the next morning early (being the day of his solemnitie) vnto the Church of the Friars Mi-  
 nors. Who, while the iacrifice of the Masse, was offered; did even at the elevation of the bodie of Christ, open her eies; did clearly see; and most deuoutely did adore. And in the time of that her adoration, crying out with a loude voice; Thankes be to God, saied shee; and to his Sainte; for that I see, the bodie of Christ. Wherevpon all that were present, bursting forth into a voice, of ioy and exultation; the woman her selfe, after the ende of the solemnities, returned into her house; with ioyfull-  
 nesse of spiritte, and with the lighte of her eies. And shee reioyced indeede, not only for having recovered the aspect, of this Corporall lighte, but much more, for that she had, by the merittes (prin-  
 cipally) of Saint Francis, and with the efficacious helpe also, of her owne faith; obtained to beholde that marveilouse Sacrament, which is the true and lively lighte, of our soules.

A certaine boy, of the towne called *Paphis*, in *Campania*, being fowerreene yeares of age; was soe



haue  
ren,  
goe  
them  
them  
bedi-  
taine  
Saint  
her  
ay. of  
s Mi-  
was  
die of  
ft de-  
her a-  
ankes  
hat I  
were  
nd ex-  
of the  
y full-  
cies.  
aving  
e, but  
(prin-  
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afflicted with some sodeine infirmite, that he had wholly lost his lefte eye. And the violent bitterness of his disease, had in such wise remooved his eye, out of the proper place: that hanging downe by a string vpo his cheeke, a whole fingers length; for the space of eight daies, together, it was almost withered, and dried away. But when no hope of helpe, was to be had, from the Physitions and surgeons, nor ought els remained to be doone, but only cutting the eye away: the Father of the boy turned himselfe with all his minde, and endeavour to craue the help, of Saint Francis. Neither yeelded he, the vnwearied helper, of distressed persons, faile even now at the prayers, of his humble Suppliante. For he by a marveilouse power, restored that withered eye, into the proper place, and to the former strength thereof: yea and beautified it also, with the beames of wished and desired sight againe.

the eleua-  
tion and a-  
doration  
of the B.  
Sacramēt.

If iniury  
were done  
to God al-  
mighty by  
invocating  
S. Francis,  
he would  
not worke  
so many  
miracles by  
him.

Loe heere  
howe saints  
are to be  
invocated  
and how  
being invo-  
cated they  
doe helpe  
those  
which seek  
for helpe.

In the same province also, at a place called Castrum, a peice of wood of great waighte, fel downe from a high place, vpon a certaine Priest; and dashing his heade, most greivously; made him blinde, of his lefte eye. Who lying vpon the grounde, beganne with a loude voice, but yet mournefully, to crie vnto Saint Francis, saying, Helpe me O most holy Father, that I may be able to goe, vnto thy feast; as vnto thy brethren I haue promised to doe. For it was the Vigil of the Saihte. And presently the Priest arising, and being in perfect manner delivered; did breake forthe into a voice of ioy and praise; now turning all the standers by,

Q

that



that lamented with him for his miserie, into a generall astonishment, and reioycing. He also went vnto the feaste, declaring vnto all men, what a clemencie and vertue he had founde, by experience made, vpon himselfe.

A certaine man of the mountaine *Garganus*, labouring in his vineyard, and hewing a peice of woode with a hatchette, chauced therewithall to hitte his owne eye, which with that stroake, he soe parted and devided, that the one halfe (as it were) thereof, did hang out of the due and proper place. And despairing, that in soe desperate a case, any helpe, could be by man, procured vnto him, he promised to fast vpon the feast of *Saine Francis*, if he would now vouchesafe, to helpe him. And presently the Sainte of God, restored the mans eye into the right place againe. And did so exquisitely reioyne it, in the place of deuision: in such wise also adorning the same, with the former clearenesse of sight, that of the hurt receaved, noe signe remained, at all.

A certaine noble mans sonne also, having bin blinde from his very nativitie, did by the merittes of *Saint Francis*, ioyfully receave, the desired lighte of his eyes: who gaining a name, according to the event, was therefore called *Illuminatus*: (which is as much to say, as illuminated, or enlightened). And afterwarde, being further grown into yeares, as one not vnmindeful, of the benefitte receaved, he entred into the Order, of blessed *Saint Francis*. Whearin he soe greatly profited, in the lighte of grace and vertue, that he might verely seeme to

be,

See how  
health is  
obtained  
by the mee-  
kinge of  
a. v. v. v.  
Which our  
heretickes  
so much  
scoffe at.



be, the childe of lighte indeede. And by the blessed  
 Fathers merittes, he at the lengthe concluded his  
 holy beginning, with a more holy ending.

At *Zachantum*, which is a towne nigh to *A-*  
*nagnia*, a certaine souldier named *Gerardus*, had vt-  
 terly lost his sight. But it fortun'd, that two Friars  
 Minors travailing from forraine partes, did come  
 to his house, for harbour. Who having bin, for the  
 reverence of Saint *Francis*, of all the whole family  
 devoutely receaved, and withall good humanitie,  
 entertained, rendring thankes to God, and their  
 hoste, came to a place of the brethren, not farre  
 from thence. One night therefore blessed Saint  
*Francis*, appeared in sleepe to one of them: saying;  
 Arise and make hast with thy companion, vnto  
 the house of our hoste, who hath receaved Christ  
 and me, in you: for I will requite the benefites of  
 his pietie. He was indeede made blinde, by the de-  
 sert, of his owne offences: which he had abun-  
 dantly desired to cleanse, by penitent confession. The  
 Father thus disappearing, the brother in haste  
 arose: that with his companion, he might spee-  
 dily performe, the commandement. And coming  
 vnto the house of their hoste, they declared in or-  
 der, vnto him, all that which the one, had seene.  
 Wherevpon, the man being not a little amazed, and  
 acknowledging all to be true, that was saide, with  
 compunction and teares, willingly made his con-  
 fession. And after promise made, of amendes: the  
 inwarde man, being thus renewed, the exteriour  
 sighte, was therewithal forthwith recovered. The  
 same of which miracle, being generally spread a-

Note heere  
 a miracle  
 to prove  
 confession  
 of sinnes  
 and pen-  
 nance  
 undertaken  
 with con-  
 trition of  
 the heart.



broade, very many were incited thereby, not only vnto the reverence of the holy Sainte, but vnto humble confession also, of their finnes, and to the meritt of Hospitalitie.

### THE EIGHT DIVISION.

*Of persons delivered, from diuers kindes of infirmities.*

**A**T *Castrum Plebis*, a certaine yong man being a begger was from his nativitie, both deafe and dumbe: whose tongue, was soe exceeding shorte and slender, that having binne many times sought for, by sundrie persons, it seemed to haue binne wholly, cut away. And it fortun'd, that one *Marcus*, did for Gods sake, entertaine this yonge into his house, who finding him to deal wel by him, began to abide with him continually. And the said *Marcus*, being one evening as supped with his wife; at what time that he also stood before them, did vnto these wordes, vnto her. This would I repute, for a great miracle, if blessed Saint Francis, would restore vnto this youth, his hearing and speaking. Vnto which wordes, he further adioyned, these: I vow (saied he) vnto God, that if Saint Francis, shall vouchsafe to worke this effect, I will for his loue, bestowe the maintenance of this youth; during his life. It is a marveilous thing. Sodeinly his tongue was lengthened; and he spake also, therewithall: saying; Glory be vnto God, and Saint Francis, who hath giuen vnto me my speeche and hearing.

*That we may see that vowes are pleasing vnto God, consider heere the wonderfull effects which followe of them.*

Brother



Brother James of *Isium*, when he was but a little boy, in his fathers house; got a greivous rupture, in his bodie. But he, albeit that he were both yong and weake; did by the instinct, of Gods heavenly spirite, enter into the Order of Saint Francis, with much devotion: not yet discovering vnto any man, the infirmitie, wherewith he was molested. But it came to passe, that when the body of Saint Francis, was translated vnto the place; where the pretious treasure, of his sacred bones is euen now reserved, the foresaid brother also, was then present, at the ioyes, of the translation: that vnto the bodie of the blessed Father, now glorified; he might exhibite, due honour and reverence. And approaching vnto the tombe, wherein those sacred bones, were placed, for devotion of spirite he embraced the same: and praying with many teares; he sodeinly founde the partes of his bodie, to be in marveilous manner restored vnto their due places. So that perceaving himselfe, to be perfectly well, he put of his trusse; & was fro thenceforth, delivered; from his former paine and greife. From the like infirmitie also brother, Bartholus, of *Eugubium*; brother Angelus of *Tudertum*; Nicholas, a Priest of *Suchanum*, one Ioannes de *Fora*, a certaine man of *Pisis*, and another of the towne of *Cisterna*; one Peter also, of *Sicilia*, a man of the towne called *Spellum*, nigh to *Asisium*, and a great many moe besides, were by the mercie of God, and by the merittes of Saint Francis, marveilously delivered.

Vpon the Sea coastes, a certaine woman having binne distracted, for fve yeares space together,



Behold  
howe one  
makinge a  
vowe is  
foorthwith  
cured.

Sup. Cap.  
1. parag. 2.

had lost her sighte and hearing. Shee tare her garments with her teethe; shee feared not the perill, either of fire or water: and at the last, shee had an horrible passion of the falling sicknesse. But one night, when God of his mercie, was pleased to haue compassion vpon her, she being from heaven environed, with the brightnesse of a hea the giuing lighte, did see Saint Francis, sitting vpon a highe Throne: before whom, shee prostrating herselfe, did make humble sute, to obtaine her health. Vnto whose petition, whereas he did, as yet forbear, to assent, the woman therevpon made a vowe, wherein shee promised, that soe long as she should haue any thing, shee woulde not denie to giue some almes, vnto such as should aske of her, for the loue of God, and of this his Sainte. This Coveante the Sainte forthwith acknowledged; as being like vnto that, which himselfe had formerly made, with our Lord: and signening her therefore, with the signe of the Crosse, he thoroughly restored her to perfect health. From the like passion also, a certaine yong maiden of *Nurſia*, and a certaine noble mans sonne, and diuers others besides, haue binne by the Sainte of God S. Francis, mercifully delivered: as hath binne certainly founde, by relation of good creditte, and auctoritie.

One Peter of *Fulgineum*, goeing one time to visite the Church of Saint Michael, and performing that pilgrimage with lesse reverence than was convenient, having tasted the water, of a certaine fontaine, was presently invaded, by the diuells: and being from that time, for three yeares together,



possessed, was miserably tormented, in his bodie, speaking most wicked thinges, and pretending, horrible matters. Yet having sometimes, some kinde of intermission, and reasonable vnderstanding, he did in humble manner, seeke after the virtuous power, of the blessed Sainte, which he knewe to be effectuell, to driue away the powers of the aire. And comming vnto the Tombe, of the pious Father, so soone as with his hand, he touched the same, he was marveilously delivered, from the diuells, that did cruelly vexe and torment him. In like manner also, the mercie of Saint Francis, did helpe a certaine woman of *Narnium*; and diuers others more that were possessed with diuells: whose greivouse vexations, with the manner also, of their recoverie, were overlong, to be in this place, particularly rehearsed.

*Heere we may see howe those that seeke for refuge at the sepulchers of Saints are helped of them.*

A certaine man of the Cittie of *Fanum*, named *Bonus*, being sicke of the Palsey, and infected also, with a Leaprosie, was brought by his paréts: vnto the Church of Saint Francis: and recovered perfect healthe, of either disease. As also another yong man of Saint *seuerinus*, named *Alto*, being wholly infected, with the Leaprosie, having made a vowe and being also brought vnto the Sepulcher of the Sainte, was by his merittes cleansed, from that infection. For the blessed Sainte had indeed a marveilouse power, in the curing of this disease, in regard that he, for the loue of humilitie and pietie, had humbly deputed himselfe, to serue the Leapears.

*Heere we may note that some Saints haue speciall priuiledge to cure some periculer disease.*

In the Diocesse of *Sora*, a certaine noble woman



named *Rogata*; having binne for three and twentie yeares space, overwearied, with a continuall bloudy fluxe, and having also sustained many euills, at the Physicians handes, did oftentimes for very excess of the disease, seeme even readie, to giue vp the ghoste. And if at any time it were staied with in her, shee did exceedingly swell thereby in all her bodie. But hearing once, a certaine boy in the streete, to sing the miracles (in the Roman tongue) which were donne by Saint *Francis*, sustaining then greate dolour and greife, she burst forth into streames of teares: and so, being inwardly inflamed with faith, shee beganne to say, O blessed Saint *Francis*? Thou that shinest, with so many miracles, if thou wouldest vouchsafe to deliver me, from his infirmitie, much glory would thereby, arise vnto thee: for, such a miracle as this, thou haste not wrought, as yet. What shall I vse more wordes? So soone as shee had but spoken, thus much, shee founde her selfe, to be by the merittes of Saint *Francis*, delivered. See also a sonne of hers named *Marke*, having his arme contracted, vpon a vowe made vnto Saint *Francis*, obtained present helpe, thereof. And a certaine woman of *Sicilia*, who had binne for seaven yeares, worne and consumed, with a bloudy fluxe, was by the signe bearer of Christ, perfectly cured.

A certaine man  
aunge  
the sinews  
of his arme  
contracted  
is helped  
by making  
a vowe to  
S. Francis.

In the Cittie of *Rome*, one *Praxedes*, a woman of greate fame, for her religious conversation, who fro her tender age, had for loue of the everlasting spouse, by the space of wel nighe fortie yeares, betaken her selfe, to a hard and straight prison, meri-

ted



ted to obtaine, at the hands of Saint Francis, a special grace and favour. For going vp one day, vpon occasion of some necessities, into the open place over the Cell, and falling downe, by meane of some fantastick violence, shee brake her foote and her thighe, as also her arme, was thereby put out of ioynt: at what time, the most loving Father, appeared vnto her, apparelled all in white, with garments of glorie: and with sweete wordes, he began in this wies, to speake vnto her: Rise vppe (saied he) my blessed daughter, rise vp, and doe not feare. And taking her by the hand, he lifted her vp and disappeared. But shee bestirring her selfe on everie side, in her litle Cell, imagined, that shee had seene, a vision: vntil such time, that at her clamour and noise, a lighte was brought, whereby she perceiving her selfe, to be by the seruaunte of Christ Saint Francis, perfectly in healt he and strength restored, did orderly declare, all the matter as it had befallen vnto her.

THE NINTH DIVISION.

*Of such as obserued not the feast, and of those that honored not the Sainte.*

**I**N the parts of Pictavia, in the village, which is called Sime, a certaine Priest named Reginald; being deuoute, vnto Saint Francis: did bid his feast to be solemnely celebrated of all his parishioners. But one of the people, not knowing the vertue, of the blessed Sainte, made lighte accounte, of his

*Note a strange miracle about keeping holy the feast of S. Francis.*



Pastors commaundement. And going forth into the feilde, to cut some wood, as he was preparing himselfe, to worke, he heard a voyce, speaking there times, in this manner, vnto him: It is affecti-  
 uall day, you may not worke. But whereas this his  
 ser vile remeritie, was neither by the commaunde-  
 ment of the Priest, nor yet by the Oracle of the  
 heavenly voice, restrained the power of God, to  
 the glory of his Sainte, vouchesafed forthwith a  
 miracle, and a scourge also, therewithall. For as  
 soone as, he nowe alreadie holding in one hand, a  
 prong, did with his other hand, lifte vp an iron in-  
 strument, to worke, either hand, was vnto either  
 instrument, by devine power, soe fastened & con-  
 ioyned, that he could not open his fingers, to let  
 goe any one, of them bothe. Wherevpon being  
 marveilously astonished, and not knowing what  
 to doe, he being followed with many people, that  
 ranne after him, to see the wonder, did make hast,  
 to goe to the Church. Where, with compunction  
 of minde, he by advise of one of the Priests that  
 assisted (for there were many Priestes invited, to  
 come to the Feaste) did before the Altar, humbly  
 devote himselfe, to Saint *Francis*: making three  
 vowes, according to the voice he had hearde, three  
 severall times: namely, to Celebrate his Feaste, to  
 repaire also on that day, vnto the Church of that  
 place, where in he should then be, and personally  
 to visite, the bodie of the Sainte. It is a wonderful  
 thing to be reported; As soone as he had made, his  
 first vow, one of his fingers, was loosened: at the  
 making of his second vow, another of his fingers

was



was enlarged: and when he had made, his third vow, yet another of his fingers, & therewithal, his whole hand, as also his other hand, was in like manner immediately sette at libertie: meane while that the people, which had now by this time, in greate numbers, assembled to that place, did most devoutly implore, the aide and clemencie, of the blessed Sainte. And for the man, being perfectly restored, to his former freedome and libertie, did without the help of any other, lay a side those instruments, whereby all men, praised Almighty God, and the admirable power, of his Sainte, who could, soe marveilously, both strike & heale againe. But those instruments, themselves; doe yntill this day (in memorie of that fact) hang vp, before an Altar, which is erected, to the honour of Saint Francis. Many other miracles also, donne there, and in the places, nighe adioyning, doe evidently shewe and declare; both that the Sainte, is of excellent degree in heaven, and that his feast, ought to be reverently celebrated, heere in earthe.

In the Cittie also of *Cenomanum*, a certaine woman, as she did, vpon the solemnitie of Saint Francis, reacht out her hand, to her distaffe, & did with her fingers, begin to take holde of her spindle, her hands, presently becomming stiffe, and drie, shee felt in her fingers exceeding torments, of burning heate. Being thus therefore, taught by the paine, to knowe the vertue, of the Sainte, with compunction of harte, shee hastily ranne to the brethren. And when the devoute Children, had for her health, craved the Clemencie of the holy Father,

*Heere we  
haue a suf-  
ficient te-  
stimony  
that the  
feasts of  
saints are  
not to be  
cōtemned.*



shee was presently made well againe: neither did any thing of the hurte, remaine in her hand, saving that for memorie of the fact, some only signe of the burning, was yet to be seene. In like manner also, in the greater *Campania*, a certaine woman, & in the village of *Olletum*, another woman, and in the towne of *Pyllum*, a third woman, contemning to celebrate the Feaste, of the blessed Father, were at the first, marveilously punished; but being afterwards penitent, were by the merittes of Saint *Francis*, more marveilously, delivered.

Heere by  
examples  
we are ad-  
monished  
not to de-  
tract from  
the honour  
of the  
Saints.

A certaine souldier of *Burgum*, within the province of *Massa*, one who had binne sometime, appertaining vnto the warres, did most impudently detract, from the marveilouse workes, and prodigious miracles, of blessed Saint *Francis*. He vsed many reproaches to pilgrimes, that came to his memorie, and against the brethren, he railed, with open and vnrestrained madnesse. But as he one time endeauored, to deface the glory, of Gods Sainte, he heaped vpon the rest of his sinnes, an horrible blasphemie, of all men to be detested. If it be true (saied he) that this same *Francis*, is a Sainte let me this day, be slaine, with a sworde: but if he be no Sainte, then let me scape, vntroucht. And the wrathe of God, made now no delay: to inflict due punishment, vpon him: considering that his prayer, was now turned into sinne. For within a litle while, vpon occasion of some eniurie, which this blasphemouse personne, offered to a nephewe of his, he tooke vp a sworde, and thrust it into his Vnles bowells. And that very day died, this wicked



ked bond slaue of Hell, and childe of darkenesse. That other men might learne, not with blasphemouse wordes, to disgrace, but with deuoute praes, to honor, the marveilouse workes, of S. Francis.

A certaine Iudge named *Alexander*, with his venomous tongue with drawinge, as many as he coulde, from the honor of Saint Francis, was by Gods deuine iudgement deprived, of the vse of his tongue, that he was not able to speake for the space of six yeares together. Who finding himselfe to be punished, in the thing wherein he had offended, being recalled vnto himselfe did with deepe and vnfaigned repētaunce, sorrow in his harte that he had barked & despitēfully spoken, against the miracles of the Saīte. For which cause the indignation of the mercifull Saīte, was now of no longer continuance; but he, vpon his repentance, & humble calling vpon him, restoring vnto him his speache, did vouchsafe to receaue him to fauour. And from that time, he consecrated his blasphemouse tongue, to the praises of the Saīte, receaving out of that scourge, both deuotion, and good instruction.

THE TENTH AND LAST DIVISION.  
Of certaine other miracles, of diuers kinds.

IN the towne of *Galium*, which is within the Diocesse of *Valua*, a certaine woman named *Maria*, who had, in a deuoute course of service, deuoted her selfe, vnto *Iesus Christ*, and blessed Saint



Francis, went out one day, in the somer season, with her owne hands to gette, her necessarie sustenance. But being almost overcomg, with the excessive heate of the wether, and beginning (even presently) to faile, by reason of an exceeding, and violent thirst, as one destitute of any meane, to obtaine a Cup of drinke, for that shee was all alone, vpon a drie and barren Mountaine, falling downe prostrate vpon the ground, as though shee had binne dead, shee did with a deuoute affection of minde, invoke the helpe, of her blessed patrone, Saint Francis. But as the woman persevered, in her affectionate and humble praier, being marvellously overwearied, with labour, thirst and heate, shee was, for a while, overtaken with sleepe. And behold, Saint Francis comming vnto her, and calling her by her name: Rise vp (saied he) and drinke of the water, which is by Gods bountie, vouchsafed vnto thee, & many moe. At the hearing of which voice, the woman being not a litle comforted, rose presently, out of her sleepe. And taking hold of a fearne brake, that was hard by her, shee puld it by the roote: and digging rounde about it, with a litle peice of wood, shee founde freshe & springing water. Which though at the first, it appeared but as a litle drop, yet after wardes, by the power of God, sodeinly increased to a fountaine. The woman therefore, did drinke of the water, and when shee had dranke her fill shee therewithall washt her eyes: which having formerly bin, very dimme of sighte, by reason of some long infirmitie, she found to be from that time forwards,



wards, endued, with a new and perfect light. Wherevpon shee hastened home: vnto all men denouncing, so straunge a miracle, to the glory of Saint Francis. At the same of this miracle, many people came, from all the partes aboute, learning by experience, the marvellouse effect of that water: meane while that at the touche therof (after confession duely made) many personnes were delivered, from sundrie daungers, of sickness. And to this day a goodly fountaine, is to be seene, in that place, where an Oratoire also, was builded, in the honor of Saint Francis.

In *Spainne*, at the towne of Saint *Facundus*, he marveilously, beyond all hope restored a withered Cheritree, belonging to a certaine man, to greenesse of leaves, to flowers, and to the bearing of fruit. He also by a miraculouse helpe: delivered the inhabitants of the lande, among them that are called *Pilesti*, from the plague of certaine wormes, that did in everie place eate vp, and consume their vineyards. And whereas a certaine Priest, dwelling nigh to *Palencia*, had a certaine baine of his, every yeare accustomably fraught with wormes, that consumed the come: the same being, faithfully commended, vnto him he did cleasely ridde from those vermin. A certaine peice of land also, belonging vnto the Lord of that place which is called *De Petra Mala*, in the Kingdome of *Castile*, being in deuoute manner commended vnto him, he safely preserved, from an odious infection, and pestilence of those harmefull flies which are called *Brachii*: whereas, all things, in the places thereaboutes

*A Wel be-  
ing spröge  
vp mira-  
culously by  
the merits  
of Saint  
Francis  
doth cure  
many di-  
seased per-  
sons, they  
only going  
to confes-  
sion be-  
fore.*



adjoyning; were with the foresaid pestilence, wasted and devoured.

A certaine man named *Martin*, driving his oxen, one time, somewhat farre from his house, vnto the Pasture, one of them did by a chaunce, for desperately breake his thighe; that there was no hope to be had, of remedie. He minding therefore to flea him; and having no instrument wherewith to doe it, returning home, did leaue the care of his ox, to Saint *Francis*; and faithfully commended him, to the faithfully Custodie of the Sainte; least that, before his returne, he should be by the wolves, devoured. In the next morning therefore early returning with his fleaing knife, to the ox, he had left in the wood; he founde him at his feede, so strong and sounde, that the broken thighe, could not be discerned from the other. For which cause he rendred thanks, to his good Pastor, who had both taken diligent care, of his ox; and had also giue helpe, vnto him. And surely, the humble Sainte doth well knowe, howe to succour all that doe call vpon him: neither doth he disdain, any the very least necessities of men. For to a man of *Arbiternum*, he restored a beast, that had binne stolen away. For a woman also of *Interdicum*, he repaired, a dishe, of hers; which had binne broken into many peices. And in like manner, whereas a certaine man of the Mountaine *Almus*, in the Marquisate, had his plough share broken in peices, he made it whole againe.

In the Diocesse of *Sabina*, there was an old woman, of fower score yeares; whose daughter de-

parting



parting this life, left a litle sucking childe behinde her. But the poore old woman, being very poore indeede, and voided of milke; and having no other woman, that would giue milke, to the thirstie childe, according as necessitie did require; could not tell what to doe, nor which way to turne her selfe. But the infante being brought, to great weakenes, she destitute of al humane helpe, did one night, with an abundant streame of teares, wholie turne her selfe, to craue the helpe, of the blessed father, *Saint Francis*. And forthwith the lover of innocent age, was present with her: who saied vnto her. I ame *Francis* (O woman) whome thou hast invocated, with so many teares. And put, saied he, thy breastes into the mouth of the childe: because our Lorde will giue milke in abundance, vnto thee. The old woman therevpon, fulfilled the commandement of the Sainte: and immediately, the breasts of fowerscore yeares olde, yelded for the plentie of milke. This marveilouse guifte, of the Sainte; was known vnto all men: and many, as well men, as women, made hast, to come and see it. And considering, that what the eyes themselues, did testifie; the tongue might not be able, to with stand; all men were thereby incited, to praise God; in the marveilouse power, and louely pietie, of his holy Sainte.

At *Spoletum*, a certaine man and his wife, having one onlie sonne: did everie day lament him, as the obloquie and reproache, of their house. For he, having his armes, ioyned fast to his necke: his knees, to his brest: and his leggs to his hinder

See how  
readie the  
Saintes are  
to helpe  
those which  
pray vnto  
them.



partes: seemed to be, no issue of man: but rather  
 some monstrous thing. And the woman, being  
 heere hence afflicted, with a more violent sor-  
 rowe, and greife; did, with frequent lamenta-  
 tions, call vnto Christe, invoking the aide of *S.  
 Francis*: whereby to vouchsafe, to succour, and  
 help her, in this soe greate a reproache. One  
 night therefore it came to passe, that when shee  
 was, by reason of this manner of heavinesse over-  
 taken with sleepe: *S. Francis*, appeared vnto her,  
 comforting her, with sweete, and compassionate  
 speeches: and moreover perswading her, to carrie  
 her childe, vnto a place nighe hand, which was  
 dedicated, to his name: that being in the name of  
 our Lorde, washed with the water, of a certaine  
 well in that place; he might receaue, full and per-  
 fect remedie. But whereas shee neglected to ac-  
 complishe, the commaundement of the Sainte;  
 he the second time, repeated those wordes vnto  
 her. Yea, and the third time also, appearing: he,  
 walking before the woman; conducted, her with  
 her childe, vnto the gate of the foresaied place.  
 At what time, certaine noble Matrones, com-  
 ming thither for deuotions sake; and being by the  
 foresaied woman, diligently informed, of the vi-  
 sion; they together with the mother, did present  
 the childe, to the brethren; and drawing water,  
 out of the well, the more noble of them, did with  
 her owne handes, washe the infant. Whoe having  
 all his members, presently brought, to their pro-  
 per places; appeared sounde and well; and the  
 greatnesse of this miracle, brought admiration,

vppon



vppon all men.

In the towne of *Chore*, within the Diocesse of *Ostea*, a certaine man, had soe absolutely lost his thighe, that he coulde by no meanes, either goe, or moue himselfe. Beinge therefore, in this vehemēt distresse; and desperate, of all humane helpe; he beganne, one night; as though he had seene *S. Frances*, present; to take this occasiō of complaining, before him: Helpe me (saied he) O Sainte *Frances* remembring my service, and the devotion, I haue exhibited, vnto thee. For I haue carried thee, vppon mine Ass: I haue kissed thy holy feete, and thy holie handes: I haue alwaies binne deuoute, vnto thee: I haue binne evermore, readie to serue thee: and behold, now I die, with the most greivouse torment, of this diseale. With these his complaintes: he that is never vnmindefull, of the benefitts bestowed vpon him; but is continually gratefull, for the devotion, which is vsed towards him; beinge moved, and incited, did presently stand before him: and did with one brother, appeare vnto him. He tolde him, that he was comme at his call: and had brought with him, helpes, for his recoverie. With a litle staffe therefore, that had in it the figure, of the letter *Thau*, he toucht the place, where the paine did lie: and therewithall breaking, an impostume: he presently restored him to perfect healtie. And whiche is more marveilous: imprinting the sacred signe of *Thau*, vppon the place of the healed vlcer, he left it there, to remaine: in memorie, of the miracle. With this marke, *S. Frances* vsed to signe his

R ij

letters:

*Loe with what devotion the Saint is innuocated and how miraculously he doth helpe his deuoted.*



letters: as often as for charities sake: he directed  
 any. But beholde, now gentle reader meane while  
 that our minde, being distracted with varietie,  
 of narrations: hath passed along, through divers  
 miracles, of the gloriousse father, S. Frances: by  
 meritte of that gloriousse standard bearer, of the  
 Crosse; it hath now, not without divine direc-  
 tion: lighted vppon the signe *Thau*, which is the  
 signe of saluation: to the intent, that out of it, wee  
 may obserue: that like as, the Crosse, was in his  
 warfare after Christe: a highe aduancement of  
 meritte, vnto saluation: soe is it also vnto him,  
 now with Christe, triumphing: made a firme  
 matter of testimony, to his honor. For this greate  
 and marveilouse misterie, of the Crosse: where in  
 the peculiar giiftes, of graces; the merittes, of  
 vertues: and the treasures, of wisdom and  
 knowledge: are in soe profounde a degree, cove-  
 red, and concealed: that it is kept secrette, from  
 the wise and prudent, of this worlde, was yet soe  
 plentifully and fully revealed, vnto this litle one  
 of Christe: that all his life, dothe follow noe  
 other thing, than the very foote-stepps, of the  
 Crosse: he dothe savour, of noe other thing, than  
 of the sweetenesse of the Crosse: nor yet dothe  
 preache, or denounce, any other thing, than the  
 glory, of the Crosse. Well, therefore, and truly,  
 might he say, with the Apostle: in the beginning  
 of his conversion: *God forbid that I should glorie, sa-  
 ving in the Crosse of our lord IESVS Christe:* And no  
 lesse truly, might he say, in the progresse, of his  
 conversation: *Whoesoever shall followe this rule, peace*

vppon



upon them, and mercie. But most truly, mighte he, in the consummation of his life, thereto adioyne, the wordes ensueing: *I beare the markes of our lorde IESVS in my bodie.* And these wordes also, we dailie desire, from him to heare: *The grace of our Lord IESVS Christe be with your spiritte brethren. Amen.*

Glorie now therefore securely, in the Crosse; thou gloriousse standard bearer of Christe: for that having taken thy beginning, from the Crosse; according to the rule, of the Crosse, thou haste made, thy proceeding: and finally, making thine end in the Crosse; of howe greate glory, thou arte in heaven; it dothe, by the testimony of the Crosse, evidently appeare, to all faithfull people. Securely now, may they followe thee; whoe doe departe, out of *Egipte*: for that, having divided the redde Sea, by the staffe, of the Crosse of Christe, they shall passe thorough the deserts, into the promised land of the living: and having also passed over; the *Iordane*, of this mortalitie; they shall, by the marveilouse power, of the Crosse, enter thereinto. Whither, wee beseeche him, whoe is the true conductor, and Saviour of his people, *Iesus Christe*, crucified; mercifully to bring vs, by the merittes of his servaunte, *S. Francis*: to the praise and glorie of God, whoe being three in personne, and one in substance, liveth and raigneth, everlastingly. Amen.

*Deo gratias.*



*A Table of all the Chapters containd  
in this booke.*

**T**he first Chapter of Saint Francis his conuerſation in ſecular habite.

The ſecond Chapter of his perfect conuerſion vnto God and how he repayered thre Churches.

The third Chapter, of the institution of his order of religion, and of the aprobaton of his rule.

The fourth Chapter, of the increaſe of the order vnder his hand, and of the confirmation of the rule formerly approved.

The fifth Chapter, of the auſterity of his life, and how the creatures of God gaue ſollace vnto him.

The ſixth Chapter, of his humiliy and obedyence, and of Gods fauourable condiſcending vnto all his deſires.

The ſeauenth Chapter, of his loue of pouerty, and of the marueilous ſupply of his wants.

The eight Chapter, of his affection of pyety: and how creatures deuoid of reaſon, ſeemed to be affected to vwards him.

The ninth Chapter, of the fervour of his charity, and of his deſire of martyrdom.

The tenth Chapter, of his diligence and feruency in prayer.

The eleuenth Chapter, of his, vnderſtanding the ſcriptures, and of his ſpirit of Prophecy.

The twelfth Chapter, of the efficacy of his preaching: and of his giſte in curing.

The thirteenth Chapter, of his holy ſtigmattes.

The fourteenth Chapter, of his patience, and death.

The fifteenth Chapter, of his canonisation, and of the tranſlation of his ſacred bodye.

The ſixteenth Chapter, containyng certaine miracles done by Saint Francis, after his death, vvhich becauſe it is long, and conſidering the miracles be of dyuers kindes, is there-

fore



fore parced into tenne diuisions, according to the seuerall titles of the miracles.

The first diuision, of the vertue, and force, of the holy stigmattes.

The second diuision, of dead persons raise to life againe.

The third diuision, of such as he delivered from the perill of death.

The fourth diuision, of persons that were saued from shippevracke.

The fifth diuision, of persons delivered out of bonds and imprisonment.

The sixth diuision, of women delivered, from danger, in Childebirthe.

The seauenth diuision, of giuing sighte vnto the blind.

The Eight diuision, of persons delivered, from diuers kindes of infirmities.

The Ninth diuision, of such as observed not the feast, and of those that honored not the Sainte.

The Tenth and last Diuision, of certaine other miracles, of diuers kindes.

For such faultes as are here escaped in printing, I beseech the curteous reader, out of his charity to pardon, and with mature iudgment vouchsafe to amend them.







St. Bonaventura